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THE BISHOPS IN THE TOWER

A Record

OF

*STIRRING EVENTS AFFECTING
THE CHURCH AND NONCONFORMISTS
FROM THE RESTORATION TO THE REVOLUTION*

BY

HERBERT MORTIMER LUCKOCK, D.D.

DEAN OF LICHFIELD

NEW AND CHEAPER EDITION

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CAROLUS : MERIVALE :

S : T : P :

ECCLESIAE : ELIENSIS : DECANO :

VIRO : ET : SCRIBENDI : LEPORE : AC : DIGNITATE

ET : INGENII : SUAVITATE :

PRÆCELLENTISSIMO :

OPUS : HOC : QUANTULUMCUNQUE :

SUMMA : CUM : OBSERVANTIA :

DEDICAT :

H : M : L :

PREFACE.

SOME years ago the late Bishop of Ely, Dr. Woodford, pressed upon the Chapter, at his Primary Visitation, the desirability of having lectures on Church History and subjects of a kindred nature delivered from time to time within the Cathedral. The Dean of Ely inaugurated the scheme by a course upon some of the Latin Fathers, afterwards published under the title of "Epochs of Early Church History;" he was followed the next year by Dr. Kennedy, after which it fell to my lot to carry on the plan. The lectures which I then delivered were published as "Studies in the History of the Prayer-Book."

Professor Kirkpatrick, last year, dealt with the history of the translations of the Bible, with especial reference to the Revised Version.

This year, being again called upon, I availed myself of the opportunity of taking up the thread of the history of the English Church where I had dropped it, viz. at "the Caroline Settlement" of the form of Public Worship.

The following pages contain the substance, though in a somewhat altered form, of the lectures then delivered.

The period which they embrace, between the Restoration and the Revolution, seemed to me to lend itself most appropriately to such a course, and to deserve the careful consideration of the Clergy and Laity at the present time. Its main interest lies in the fact that it witnessed the imposition of the civil and religious disabilities upon Nonconformists, almost the last of which have been removed in our own generation. Nothing can be more interesting, at a time when the position of Nonconformists in relation to the Church occupies so much of men's thoughts, than to trace the antagonism up to its origin, and to watch the process by which it became stereotyped.

It is a very common thing for Nonconformists to visit their wrongs upon the Clergy, as though they had been their bitterest enemies and the primary cause of the disadvantages under which they have laboured. But a careful study of the controversies touching the disabling Acts of the seventeenth century will reveal the fact that the prominent part was taken by the Laity. Individual Bishops may have advocated and certainly did advocate very strongly the oppressive measures; but they were few in number, and their influence was as nothing compared to that of the leading members of the House of Commons.

The conflict between the King and Parliament, which ended in the overthrow of the Stuart dynasty, began almost immediately after the Restoration of the Monarchy. Charles II. was undoubtedly a man of little or no religious principle, but he did make some genuine efforts to insure the liberty for tender consciences which he promised before his return from exile. At first he experienced opposition, mainly from the Tory

element in Parliament, which was largely in the ascendant, and which dreaded the spirit of Nonconformity because of the confusion and ruin it had wrought during the Commonwealth. But after that suspicions grew up that his desire for toleration of Dissent was based upon his sympathy with Roman Catholics, he found the opposition strengthened by the full force of the Protestant Nonconformists, who, careless of all that the king had done for them, were ready to postpone their own interests to the one object of thwarting Rome. Indeed, so intense was their dread of the Roman religion, that they expressed their willingness to put up with any disabilities rather than that the Romanist should share with themselves religious liberty.

The secret efforts of Charles II. in favour of the Papacy were continued in the most open manner by James II., almost from the time that he ascended the throne; but popular feeling ran so high against Rome, that, had he not been blinded by passion and prejudice, he might have

seen at the outset that he was engaged in a hopeless task. The Bishops were foremost to see the danger and to realise the importance of making a resolute stand against his designs, and the nation gave them its full and cordial support.

It is, perhaps, worth while here to justify the title given to this book, which may appear at first sight somewhat fanciful. It has been adopted because the imprisonment of the Bishops was an act in which the absolutism and Romeward policy of the restored Stuarts culminated; it was an event, too, which contributed immediately to their downfall, and so far may well be considered as the chief point of interest and importance in the period with which these pages are occupied.

In the closing chapter we have ventured to put forward a view of the motives of the Non-jurors, which, it is hoped, will help to justify their action in the eyes of those who have no sympathy with the high Tory principles which are usually associated with their name. It is quite impossible to study their lives without

seeing how deeply they were moved with fear lest William of Orange and the party in the State which sympathised with his religious views should rob the Church of its Catholic character, unless some powerful protest were made. The debt which the Church owes to them for averting such a calamity it is hardly possible to exaggerate. I have not hesitated, however, to point out that their conduct, in creating a schism by consecrating Bishops for their own community with no legally appointed sees, is most sorely to be regretted.

So far touching the general subject of this record.

The lectures were delivered in two other places besides Ely Cathedral. In consequence of the strong views expressed by the Bishop of Chester on the importance of the Clergy providing instruction in the history of the Church for their people, the Vicar of S. Peter's, Eaton Square, London, after consultation with the Archbishop of Canterbury, and with his Grace's entire ap-

proval, determined to try the experiment of a course of lectures on Sundays, at a time likely to suit those who do not attend an evening service. Four o'clock in the afternoon was selected, and, as other Clergy may be disposed to adopt the plan, it is worth while to add that a very considerable number of persons attended, and that the Clergy noticed that, from among their own parishioners at least, but few were present who took the lecture as a substitute for the usual Evensong.

I delivered the lectures also in S. James's Church, Bury St. Edmunds, in my capacity as a member of the Society of Ely Diocesan Mission Preachers, instituted by the late Bishop shortly before his death. It is the duty of each member, once a year, if called upon by the Warden (the Archdeacon of Sudbury), either to conduct a Mission, a Retreat, or a Quiet Day, or to preach a course of sermons, or to deliver lectures on an ecclesiastical subject in some parish in the diocese.

It only remains for me to express my thanks to the Rev. A. R. Evans, and the Rev. W. T. Harrison, Honorary Canons of the Cathedral, for their kind help in correcting the proof-sheets, and for many useful suggestions.

If I may express my chief hope, it is that what I have written may tend in some slight degree to diminish the asperity that is so commonly felt by Nonconformists towards the Clergy, and so to bring us at least one step nearer to that "home reunion," for which, however remote or even hopeless it may appear under present circumstances, all true Churchmen feel it a bounden duty to strive and pray.

H. M. L.

COLLEGE, ELY,

Feast of S. Michael and All Angels,

MDCCCLXXXVI.

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I.

The Restoration of the Monarchy, and the King's
Promises to secure Religious Liberty for all his
Subjects.

CHAPTER I.

The Restoration of the Monarchy, and the King's Promises to secure Religious Liberty for all his Subjects.

WHEN Oliver Cromwell was dead, the nation A military despotism threatened. awoke to the fact that the form of government which he had left behind him was republican only in name. The Army, by which he had enforced his will, when his controlling hand was withdrawn, found itself so powerful, that it determined to become the master instead of the servant of the Commonwealth.

Richard succeeded his father, and was accepted without hesitation by the country as the lawful heir to the Protectorate; but the officers of the Army began to conspire against him, from the very day of his accession, and in a few months accomplished his overthrow.¹

¹ Richard had shewn no military capacity. The Army would have preferred Henry, the younger of the two brothers, who inherited some of his father's qualities; but Oliver Cromwell had

4 *The Restoration of the Monarchy.*

They remembered that it was by their aid that Cromwell had ejected the Long Parliament, and established a new polity; and they thought that they would best assert their power by changing the government again. They invited the old Republican Parliament to reassemble at S. Stephen's, and, as soon as it met, in a fit of arbitrary caprice they rose up and expelled it from the House. It was a foretaste of what awaited the nation under a military despotism.

The great parties of the State recognized the necessity of immediate action, to rid themselves of such an odious and oppressive tyranny.

The
restoration
of the
Monarchy
resolved
upon.

It was under these circumstances that they resolved, in the face of a common danger, to sink, at least for the time, all differences of political and religious creed, and, whether Cavalier or Roundhead, Episcopalian or Presbyterian, to unite together for the restoration of the exiled King. But how was

named the former as his successor quite unexpectedly, for it was known that he thought meanly of his abilities. His first concession was the appointment of a Council of Officers, which at once took steps for separating the Army from the Civil Power. It was the fear of this which turned men's thoughts to the expediency of restoring the Monarchy. Lord Falkland, in Parliament, aroused the fear by his prediction: "You have long been talking of three Estates; there is a fourth, which, if not looked well to, will turn us all out of doors." Parliament was dissolved at the bidding of the Army, April 22, 1659, and, shortly after, Richard retired into private life.

the restoration to be effected? The troops were irresistible; the very first movement was certain to be instantly crushed. At this crisis, when all hearts were filled with anxious fears, divisions sprang up in the Army. The troops in Scotland became jealous of the troops in England; and when the Household Brigade in London took upon itself to close the doors of the Houses of Parliament, it roused the indignation of the soldiers north of the Tweed. General Monk placed himself at the head of seven thousand of the latter, and marched into England in defence of the civil authority. From the moment of his entry into London, it was clear that the destinies of the nation were in his hand, but none knew¹—he did not know himself—what form of government would be set up. He was a man of no settled principle, and he resolved to shape his course by the rule of expediency. An incident that he witnessed in the City, is credited with having fixed his decision.

The inter-
vention of
General
Monk.

¹ The distinctive characteristic of the man was an impenetrable secrecy. "All parties, royalists, protectionists, and republicans, claimed him for their own, though that claim was grounded on their hopes, not on his conduct." Lingard, viii. 290. Nothing could be worse than his dissimulation in reference to the letters which the King sent over by Grenville. He professed himself devoted to the interests of the Parliament, while he was secretly negotiating with the King. Lingard, viii. 300; Kennet's "Register," 26, 79-87.

6 *The Restoration of the Monarchy.*

A statue of Charles I. had once filled a conspicuous niche in the front of the Royal Exchange; but, after his execution, it had been removed, and an inscription written where it had stood: "Exit tyrannus, regum ultimus, anno libertatis Angliæ restitutæ primo, annoque Domini 1648." Monk was passing, when he saw a painter set up a ladder against the building, and ascend to obliterate the writing. A vast crowd was assembled to witness the act, and when the man waved his cap, and cried, "God save King Charles II.," the "viva" was caught up and swelled by a thousand voices. It convinced him that the tide of popular feeling had set strongly towards the re-establishment of the Monarchy, and he declared for a free Parliament, which was sure to restore it.

A time of terrible suspense followed. The Army hated a king, and their aversion culminated in the hatred of the Stuarts. Civil war and bloodshed seemed inevitable; but one bold stroke,¹ by which the spirit of the soldiers was broken, warded off the calamity.

¹ Lambert escaped from the Tower, in which he had been imprisoned by order of the Council, and made a desperate attempt to restore the power of the Army. He collected together a number of troops, and would have soon headed a formidable force, but General Monk at once sent Ingoldsby to attack him. Lambert was defeated, captured, and sent to Tyburn.

The order for a general election was received in a transport of delight. The bells were rung in all the churches; bonfires were lit; oxen were roasted, and the whole nation was given up to festivities. There could be only one result of an appeal to the country at such a time. A large majority of members was returned pledged to the restoration of Royalty. Many of them, it is true, were Presbyterians; but not a few who professed this form of religion were prepared to welcome a constitutional Monarchy. What they hated was absolutism. A king with guarantees for the political freedom of his subjects was, they had come to believe, better than a republic, and they fancied that there would be no difficulty in exacting the requisite pledges from one who had been so long an exile.

The election
of the first
Convention
Parliament.

The two Houses assembled on April 26, 1660. A difficulty at once arose, as, by the Constitution, the issue of a Royal Writ was the only legal summons; it was solved by the adoption of a new title, "the Convention" Parliament.

The Peers, whose places had been usurped by the shoemakers and draymen whom Cromwell had raised to the Upper House, re-occupied their hereditary seats in the Legislature.¹

¹ At first the Presbyterian Peers alone, who had sat in the

8 *The Restoration of the Monarchy.*

In the Commons the majority was composed of Royalists and Presbyterians in favour of a limited Monarchy, the Independents returning but few members.

The failure of the Independents to obtain adequate representation.

The failure of the latter class of Nonconformists to secure an adequate representation simplified greatly the King's return. They suddenly sank from a position of supremacy to one of insignificance.¹ The ideal of the Independent² was a religious society, in which each individual congregation was strictly autonomous, recognizing no authority but that of Jesus Christ. It stood distinguished, on the one hand, from Episcopacy, in having no gradation of ministerial or clerical orders, or individuals above the congregation; and, on the other hand, from

House in 1648, assembled; but the excluded Peers soon saw that they had as much right to their seats, and determined to avail themselves of it. About four-fifths of the whole were Royalists.

¹ On March 13, a vote passed the House to deprive Owen, the leader of the Independents, of the Deanery of Christchurch, Oxford. Reynolds, a Presbyterian, was put in his place. Kennet's "Register," 81.

² They were in spirit descendants of the Brownists of Queen Elizabeth's time. Neal says they obtained the name of Independents from their view that, "every particular congregation of Christians has an entire and complete power of jurisdiction over its members, to be exercised by the elders thereof within itself." "Apologetical Narrative of Independents," iii. 112.

Presbyterianism, by having no such gradation of courts or representative bodies.

During the Commonwealth and Protectorate Independency had become an immense political power, as well as a religious influence. Cromwell was an Independent, and he saw that Independent principles were exactly suited to the emergency, "republican and revolutionary, but steeped in the commanding emotions and enthusiasms of religion." The Army was almost entirely composed of Independents. Under such a powerful Protectorate, the Independent cause spread rapidly, especially in East Anglia; and many Independent ministers succeeded to parishes from which Episcopalians were ejected.

But such was the force of the reaction in favour of the Monarchy, that the Independents were completely outvoted at the elections.

The King, anticipating the result, despatched a messenger¹ from his place of exile to await the assembling of Parliament, who presented himself, on May 1, at the bar of the House of Commons, and delivered the letter from his Royal master. The members remained bare-headed while the Speaker read it—an auspicious omen for the acceptance of its proposals! This was the historical "Declaration

The Declaration of Breda.

¹ Sir John Grenville.

of Breda,"¹ the document so full of promise, but destined to create such bitter disappointment to Dissenters—clung to with a tenacity of hope that would not be refused through years of persecution, and abandoned by him who wrote it, only when he found himself powerless to carry it out.

There is only one clause that really comes within the scope of this history, but as that which precedes it has an important bearing in illustrating the cause of the King's failure to ensure the exercise of religious liberty to his subjects, it may be quoted with it. It was the clause which granted exemption from punishment to the regicides; it ran as follows:—

"We do by these Presents declare that we do grant a free and general pardon, which we are ready upon demand to pass under our Great Seal of England, to allow our subjects of what degree or equality soever, who, within forty days after the publishing hereof, shall lay hold upon this our favour, and shall by any public act declare their doing so, and that they return to loyalty and obedience of good subjects, excepting only such persons as shall hereafter be excepted by Parliament; those only excepted, let all our subjects, how faulty soever, rely upon the word of a King, solemnly

¹ Cf. Appendix i. of this Chapter.

given by this Declaration, that no crime whatsoever committed against us or our Royal Father before the publication of this, shall ever rise in judgment or be brought in question against any of them, to the least endamagement of them, either in their lives, liberties, or estates." So far touching the regicides.

To the Dissenters he wrote, promising liberty of conscience in matters of Religion, provided that the exercise of it did not disturb the peace of the Kingdom:

"Because the passion and uncharitableness of the times have produced several opinions in Religion, by which men are engaged in parties and animosities against each other, which, when they shall hereafter unite in a freedom of conversation, will be composed or better understood: we do declare a liberty to tender consciences, and that no man shall be disquieted or called in question for differences of opinion in matters of Religion, which do not disturb the peace of the Kingdom, and that we shall be ready to consent to such an Act of Parliament as upon mature deliberation shall be offered to us, for the full granting that indulgence."

The Declaration received a cordial welcome,¹ and Its reception

¹ Cf. Clarendon, xvi. 904, 905. Parliament expressed its joy by voting a grant of £4500 in gold, and a bill of exchange for £25,000, for the King, as well as £500 to Sir John Grenville, "to buy a

in Parlia-
ment.

the terms in which the Speaker of the House communicated this to the Royal messenger will best express the eagerness of Parliament to restore the King. "I need not tell you," he said, "with what grateful and thankful hearts the Commons, now assembled in Parliament, have received His Majesty's gracious letter. *Res ipsa loquitur*. You yourself have been *ocularis et auricularis testis de rei veritate*. Our bells and our bonfires have already begun the proclamation of His Majesty's goodness and of our joys. We have told the people that our King, the glory of England, is coming home again, and they have resounded it back into our ears, that they are ready, and that their hearts are open to receive him. Both Parliament and people have cried aloud to the King of kings in their prayers. Long live King Charles the Second !"

Episcopalian and Presbyterian had shaken hands and united for the restoration of the Monarchy ; but the truce in politics was no real truce in religion. The one clung to Apostolic Orders as the absolute essential of a valid ministry, and to the Liturgy of the Church as the necessary safeguard from heretical

jewel to wear, as an honour for being the messenger of so gracious a message." For the text of the message, *cf.* "Mercurius Publicus," No. 19 ; Kennet's "Register," 132.

worship; the other felt himself conscientiously pledged to the extirpation of Prelacy, and loved the freedom of the Directory.¹

Not unnaturally the different parties, both in Church and State, as soon as the Proclamation had gone forth, were anxious to give expression to their loyalty, and, as far as might be, to obtain concessions as the price of their support.

Presbyterian
deputations
to the King
at the
Hague.

Deputations flocked to the Hague to tender the homage of Peers and Commons. Among them eight Presbyterian divines sought an audience from the King—Reynolds, Calamy, Manton, and Case were the chief. After professions of loyalty, they pleaded for liberty of conscience in religion and religious worship, professing themselves “no enemies to moderate Episcopacy,” and desiring that some “things, which, in the judgment of those who used them, were indifferent, might not be pressed upon them in the worship of God.”

The King replied with kindness, but with caution. He had no intention of imposing hard conditions or

¹ “A Directory for the Public Worship of God, throughout the Three Kingdoms of England, Scotland and Ireland,” was drawn up by the Westminster Assembly, July 1, 1643, and published and enforced the following year. For its characteristic features and contents, cf. “Studies in the History of the Prayer-Book,” by the author, pp. 226–238.

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embarrassing their consciences, but he had referred the settling all differences of the nature they mentioned, to the wisdom of the Parliament; the two Houses were the best judges what indulgence and toleration were necessary for the repose of the kingdom.

Their
appeal for
concessions.

Dissatisfied with the vagueness of his promise, they asked for another audience, and, waxing bold, they ventured to deprecate the use of the Liturgy, even in his private chapel, on the ground that it would be unfamiliar to the people's ears. The request called forth a well-merited rebuff, to the effect that, while he granted them their liberty, they could hardly expect that he should resign his own; he believed the Common Prayer to be the best in the world—he had never discontinued it, even in places where it was far more disliked than he hoped it was in England, and, whatever happened, he would tolerate none other in his own chapel.¹ Still undismayed, they pressed for further concessions to their invincible prejudices: the sight of the surplice, they urged, would give sore offence to the people, and they asked that the Royal Chaplains might be forbidden to use it. But the King was immovable. The surplice, he replied, had always been accounted

¹ Rapin, ii. 617; Kennet's "Register," 152; Collier, viii. 384.

a decent habit, and constantly worn in the Church of England till the late troublous times, and that whatever disorder he might be compelled to connive at, he would never abet any irregularity by his own practice, or discountenance the laudable customs of the Church in which he was bred.

The deputation withdrew discouraged, but not in despair; they resolved to renew their importunities when he returned to his country; but they found to their cost that they had to reckon with a will stronger than the King's—a will fettered by no promises of conciliation, but determined to humble them even to the dust. It was that of the Parliament of the nation.

In his Declaration from Breda, the King, in pretended carefulness for the liberties of the people, introduced a saving clause for the execution of his conciliatory policy, making it depend upon the assent of Parliament. There can be little question that he had wholly miscalculated the extent of the support he was likely to obtain in this direction.

The Houses of Parliament were impatient for his restoration, and, in the delirium of joy which seized the nation, exacted no pledges¹ for the limitation of

The attitude taken up by Parliament.

¹ Two members of the Commons, Hale and Prynne, had vehemently contested the importance of exacting pledges, but

monarchical power; but when once it was accomplished, they let him feel that he was powerless without them.

They thwarted him at the very outset, and that in the proposals of his manifesto, which his honour bound him to adhere to.

He had declared, on the word of a king, that the crimes committed against himself and his Royal father should never rise up in judgment against the offenders. But Parliament showed him that his honour was a matter of indifference, when his policy was opposed to theirs. The course of the debates upon the Acts of Oblivion and Indemnity, and the sweeping proscription suggested by the Lords and half welcomed by the Commons, are the clearest proof of their determination to assert their supremacy.

Trials of the
regicides.

The trials of the regicides belied the whole spirit of the Royal Proclamation. Ten were executed at once, with circumstances of unwonted brutality.¹ Nineteen were imprisoned for life. Fifty-one were reserved for trial. And as a proof of the extent to

Monk was impatient for the Restoration, and declared that he could not answer for the peace of the nation, if there was any further delay.

¹ Six only of these had signed the warrant for the King's execution. Two had acted as officers to keep guard over the King. For particulars, cf. Howell's "State Trials," v. 1230 *et seq.*

which feelings of revenge can degrade a nation, the relatives of four Peers¹ who had been executed during the Commonwealth were granted the privilege, each one, of naming a victim whose blood should be shed in satisfaction of their wrongs. Yet further, the bodies of Cromwell, Ireton, and others were taken from their tombs in Westminster, drawn upon hurdles to Tyburn, where they were hanged upon a gallows from morning to evening, and then thrown ignominiously into a felon's grave.²

All this was the work of Parliament. Little is said, it is true, of opposition on the part of the King; but, though he suffered himself at one time to be carried away by the passion for revenge³ which proved irresistible, nothing but his influence prevented the Legislature from rescinding the Act of Indemnity altogether.

¹ Hamilton, Holland, Capel, and Derby. In three instances a man was actually named and executed.

² The remains of other persons were dishonoured, especially of Cromwell's mother, Pym, and Admiral Blake. Kennet's "Register," 367; Rapin, ii. 622; Evelyn's "Diary," October 17, 1660, and January 30, 1661.

³ In the case of Sir Harry Vane it is recorded that Charles had written to Clarendon, "He is too dangerous a man to let live, if we can honestly put him out of the way;" yet he was one of those whose pardon had been secured by the royal promise. "State Trials," vi. 119.

It gave the King a foretaste of an even stronger antagonism, with which he was destined to struggle in vain, to fulfil his second promise to his subjects, viz. that of liberty for tender consciences in matters of Religion. Henceforward, we shall see the King and the Parliament invariably advocating contrary policies; the former conciliatory, the latter coercive.

Almost immediately after his restoration the King gave to the Presbyterians an earnest of his favour, by appointing eight of their number to be Royal Chaplains.¹ It raised their hopes, and gave them easier access to his person. Without loss of time they drew up a list of concessions, which they sought to obtain. They were based upon certain suggestions, often spoken of as proposals of Archbishop Usher, made with a view to comprehension, and especially to lighten the yoke of Episcopal government, and individual power. Their aim was to establish the authority of "councils rising one above another in regular gradation," as a substitute for that of Bishops and Archbishops.

Presbyterian proposals for retrenching the authority of the Bishops.

The proposals may be gathered up into four heads very briefly:²—

¹ Reynolds, Bates, Manton, Calamy, Wallis, Spurstow, Baxter, and Case. Only five of them preached before the King, and that but once.

² For the full text of Usher's propositions, cf. Collier, viii. 387.

1st. That an Incumbent should only have power to censure a parishioner with the consent of the Churchwardens and Sidesmen.

2nd. That contumacious and incorrigible offenders should be brought before suffragan or ruri-decanal monthly Synods.

3rd. That there should be liberty of appeal to a Diocesan Synod, which might meet once or twice in the year, for the consideration of matters of great moment.

4th. That there should be a Provincial Synod meeting triennially and in concert with Parliament, if the Houses were sitting, regulating all ecclesiastical concerns.

Such was the basis of the Presbyterian proposition, but it will be seen that they demanded much more in the appendix, which they annexed, touching the use of the Liturgy and the accompanying ceremonies. While owning the lawfulness of prescribed forms, they asked for the appointment of a committee to revise the existing Prayer-book; and to leave optional such externals as kneeling at the Sacrament, wearing the surplice, signing with the Cross in Baptism, and bowing at the Name of Jesus rather than at that of Christ or Emmanuel.¹

Proposals for
Liturgical
Revision.

¹ The custom is erroneously said to have originated in the direc-

The consideration of their proposals was referred by the King to the Bishops, who peremptorily rejected all retrenchment of Episcopal jurisdiction, but raised no objection to a revision of the Liturgy, in case it met with His Majesty's approval.

These proposals were followed, on October 25, by the King's "Declaration concerning ecclesiastical affairs."¹ This conceded in principle almost all the Presbyterian demands, both as to Church government and ceremonial, overriding Canons and Primitive discipline, dispensing with statutes, and carrying the Royal prerogative to the farthest limit!

Before its publication the contents of it had become known, and led to impassioned debates in the Commons; and on one occasion the House

tion of S. Paul to the Philippians, Phil. ii. 10. The personal title of our Blessed Lord, Jesus, was especially obnoxious to the opponents of Christianity in early times, hence the contemptuous expressions, "Jesus the Impostor," "Jesus the Galilean Impostor," hence, too, the use of the formula for renouncing the Faith, ἀναθέμα Ἰησοῦς. The Christians, as an act of reparation, determined to assign especial honour to the Name which had been so dishonoured. It was akin to the feelings which prompted them to reverence the instrument of the Crucifixion—the Cross of shame. The fact, then, that the above passage, "At the Name of Jesus every knee shall bow," should rightly be rendered, "In the Name," etc., does not in any way affect the propriety of the custom.

¹ Cf. Appendix ii. of this Chapter.

refused to rise, though darkness had set in; and lights were introduced for the first time into the House of Commons to enable the members to continue the discussion. In this temper they were asked to pass a Bill for converting the King's Declaration into law. It met with most determined opposition, and was thrown out.¹

This was the second rebuff which the King had received—the second time his Breda promise had proved a broken reed.

The dissolution of the "Convention" Parliament, a few weeks after, so far from brightening the prospect of Nonconformity, soon overcast the whole sky. The Cavaliers and Episcopalianism carried the new elections by an immense majority.

APPENDIX I.

THE DECLARATION OF BREDA.

CHARLES, by the Grace of God, King of England, Scotland, and France, and Ireland, Defender of the Faith, etc. To all our loving subjects, of what degree or quality soever, greeting: If the general distraction and confusion which is spread over the whole kingdom doth not awaken all men to a desire and longing that those wounds, which have so many years together been kept bleeding, may be

¹ The chief opponents were the Ministers of the Crown, which points to duplicity on the part of the King. It was thrown out by a majority of 28 in a House of 340.

bound up, all we can say will be to no purpose ; however, after this long silence, we have thought it our duty to declare how much we desire to contribute thereunto ; and that, as we can never give over the hope, in good time, to obtain the possession of that right which God and nature hath made our due, so we do make it our daily suit to the Divine Providence, that He will, in compassion to us and our subjects, after so long misery and sufferings, remit, and put us into a quiet and peaceable possession of that our right with as little blood and damage to our people as is possible ; nor do we desire more to enjoy what is ours, than that all our subjects may enjoy what by law is theirs, by a full and entire administration of justice throughout the land, and by extending our mercy where it is wanted and deserved. And to the end that the fear of punishment may not engage any, conscious to themselves of what is past, to a perseverance in guilt for the future, by opposing the quiet and happiness of their country, in the Restoration both of Kings, peers, and people, to their just, ancient, and fundamental rights, we do, by these presents, declare, That we do grant a free and general Pardon, which we are ready, upon demand, to pass under our Great Seal of England, to all our subjects, of what degree or quality soever, who, within forty days of the publishing thereof, shall lay hold upon this our grace and favour, and shall, by any public act, declare their doing so, and that they return to the loyalty and obedience of good subjects, excepting only such persons as shall hereafter be excepted by Parliament, those only to be excepted. Let all our subjects, however faulty soever, rely upon the word of a King, solemnly given by this present Declaration, That no crime whatsoever committed against us or our royal father before the publication of this, shall ever rise in judgment, or be brought in question, against any of them, to the least endamage of them, either in their lives, liberties, or estates, or (as far forth as lies in our power) so much as to the prejudice of their reputations, by any reproach or term of distinction from the rest of our best subjects ; we desiring and ordaining, that henceforth all notes of discord, separation, and

difference of parties be utterly abolished among all our subjects, whom we invite and conjure to a perfect union among themselves, under our protection for the Resettlement of our just Rights and theirs, in a Free Parliament, by which, upon the word of a King, we will be advised. And because the passion and uncharitableness of the times have produced several opinions in Religion, by which men are engaged in parties and animosities against each other (which, when they shall hereafter unite in a freedom of conversation, will be composed, or better understood), we do declare a Liberty to tender Consciences, and that no man shall be disquieted, or called in question, for differences of opinion, in matters of Religion, which do not disturb the peace of the Kingdom; and that we shall be ready to consent to such an act of Parliament as, upon mature deliberation, shall be offered to us, for the full granting that indulgence.—And because, in the continued distractions of so many years, and so many and great revolutions, many grants and purchases of estates have been made to, and by, many officers, soldiers, and others, who are now possessed of the same, and who may be liable to actions at law upon several titles, we are likewise willing that all such differences and all things relating to such grants, sales, and purchases, shall be determined in Parliament; which can best provide for the just satisfaction of all men who are concerned.—And we do further declare, That we will be ready to consent to any act or acts of Parliament to the purposes aforesaid, and for the full satisfaction of all arrears due to the officers and soldiers, of the army under the command of General Monk, and that they shall be received into our service upon as good pay and conditions as they now enjoy. Given under our Sign Manual and Privy-Signet, at our Court at Breda, this 14th of April, 1660, in the twelfth year of our reign.

APPENDIX II.

THE KING'S DECLARATION CONCERNING ECCLESIASTICAL
MATTERS.

OUR present consideration and work is, to gratify the private consciences of those who are grieved with the use of some ceremonies, by indulging to, and dispensing with their omitting those ceremonies; not utterly to abolish any which are established by law (if any are practised contrary to law, the same shall cease), which would be unjust and of ill example; and to impose upon the conscience of some, for the satisfaction of the conscience of others, which is otherwise provided for. As it could not be reasonable that men should expect that we should ourselves decline, or enjoin others to do so, to receive the blessed Sacrament upon our knees, which in our conscience is the most humble, most devout, and most agreeable posture for that holy duty, because some other men, upon reasons best, if not only known to themselves, choose rather to do it sitting or standing: we shall leave all decisions and determinations of that kind, if they shall be thought necessary for a perfect and entire Unity and Uniformity throughout the nation, to the advice of a national synod, which shall be duly called, after a little time, and a mutual conversation between persons of different persuasions, hath mollified those distempers, abated those sharpnesses, and extinguished those jealousies which make men unfit for those consultations. And upon such advice we shall use our best endeavour that such laws may be established as may best provide for the peace of the Church and State.

Provided that none shall be denied the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, though they do not use the gesture of kneeling in the act of receiving. In the mean time, out of comparison and compliance towards those who would forbear the cross in Baptism, we are content that no man shall be compelled to use the same, or suffer for not doing it; but if any parent desire to have his child christened

according to the form used, and the Minister will not use the sign, it shall be lawful for that parent to procure another Minister to do it: and if the proper Minister shall refuse to omit that ceremony of the Cross, it shall be lawful for the parent, who would not have his child so baptized, to procure another Minister to do it, who will do it according to his desire.

No man shall be compelled to bow at the name of Jesus, or suffer in any degree for not doing it, without reproaching those who out of their devotion continue that ancient ceremony of the Church.

For the use of the surplice, we are contented that all men be left to their liberty to do as they shall think fit, without suffering in the least degree for wearing or not wearing it; provided that this liberty do not extend to our own Chapel, Cathedral, or Collegiate Churches, or to any College in either of our Universities; but that the several statutes and customs for the use thereof in the said places be there observed as formerly.

And because some men, otherwise pious and learned, say they cannot conform unto the subscriptions of the Canon, nor take the oath of the Canonical obedience; we are content, and it is our will and pleasure (so they take the oath of Allegiance and Supremacy), that they shall receive Ordination, Institution, and Induction, and shall be permitted to exercise their function, and to enjoy the profits of their livings, without the said subscription or oath of Canonical obedience. And, moreover, that no persons in the Universities shall, for the want of such subscription, be hindered in the taking of their Degrees.

Lastly, that none be judged to forfeit his presentation or benefice, or be deprived of it, upon the Statute of the Thirteenth of Queen Elizabeth, chapter the twelfth, so he read and declare his assent to all the Articles of Religion which only concern the Confession of the true Christian Faith, and the doctrine of the Sacraments comprised in the book of Articles in the said Statute mentioned. In a word, we do again renew what we have formerly said in our Declaration from Breda for the liberty of tender consciences, that

no man shall be disquieted or called in question for differences of opinion in matters of Religion, which do not disturb the peace of the Kingdom ; and if any have been disturbed in that kind since our arrival here, it hath not proceeded from any direction of ours.¹

¹ The Declaration is much longer, but we have given as much as seems to bear upon the subjects under consideration.

II.

The Imposition by Parliament of Disabilities upon
Protestant Nonconformists, despite the opposition of
the King.

CHAPTER II.

The Imposition by Parliament of Disabilities upon Protestant Nonconformists, despite the opposition of the King.

THE year 1661 opened with an outbreak of Puritan fanaticism, that largely increased the gloom of Presbyterian prospects. The insurrection of Fifth Monarchy men under the wild enthusiast Thomas Venner, to establish the personal reign of Jesus Christ upon earth, and suppress all human authority, filled the metropolis with fear and confusion. Though not more than fifty in number, the insurgents overpowered the police, and carried all before them. Shops were closed, gates barricaded, general business was suspended ; and, mere handful though they were, they held even the Life Guards at bay. Eventually the greater part were killed, the rest captured, tried, and executed.¹

The outbreak was seized upon by the Government as a pretext for the issue of an edict, four days after,

¹ Kennet's "Reg.," 355, 362, 363.

measure for
Noncon-
formists.

for closing the conventicles of Quakers, Anabaptists, and other Nonconformists.

It was the first application of the principles of the late legislation; but it was quickly followed by a second.

The second
disabling
measure.

The new Parliament assembled on May 8, and established a sacramental test for the performance of civil functions. It was voted that the Holy Communion should be celebrated in S. Margaret's Church according to the accustomed rites, and that no member be suffered to take his seat in the House of Commons who refused to communicate.¹

Thus was inaugurated that unhappy system by which religious disabilities were allowed to interfere with the exercise of political and civil rights.

The Savoy
Conference.

In the spring the King determined to fulfil his promise to the Presbyterians in the matter of Liturgical Revision. He had authority to issue a Commission to consider reforms, though its recommendations could only be enforced by the ratification of Parliament. Twelve Bishops and twelve Presbyterian divines, with nine coadjutors on either side, formed the deliberative Assembly,² from which so

¹ Kennet's "Reg.," 446.

² For full particulars of the Conference and the persons engaged, cf. "Studies in the History of the Prayer-Book," by the author,

much was expected for the pacification of the Church. The place of meeting was the historic Palace of the Savoy, and the sittings were prolonged for many days and weeks, but only to issue in the abortive conclusion, "that the Church's welfare, that unity and peace, and his Majesty's satisfaction were ends upon which they were all agreed; but as to the means, they could not come to any harmony."

While the Presbyterians were striving to effect a compromise with their opponents in the Council-chamber at Savoy, the House of Commons was manifesting the utmost impatience to place all schemes of comprehension and tolerance beyond the reach of possibility.

The "Solemn League and Covenant"¹ was the charter of Presbyterian principles: it pledged its signatories to the extirpation of Prelacy, which it held to be linked with superstition and heresy,

pp. 162 *et seq.* The Bishops were Frewen, Sheldon, Cosin, King, Warner, Sanderson, Morley, Henchman, Laney, Sterne, Walton, and Gauden. Their coadjutors Gunning, Heylin, Earles, Barwick, Hacket, Pearson, Pierce, Sparrow, and Thorndike. The Presbyterians were Reynolds, Baxter, Tuckney, Wallis, Manton, Conant, Spurstow, Calamy, Jackson, Case, Newcommen, and Clark. Their coadjutors Jacomb, Bates, Horton, Rawlinson, Lightfoot, Collins, Cooper, Drake, and Woodbridge.

¹ It was accepted by the Westminster Divines in the presence of the House of Commons, September 25, 1643.

and contrary to sound doctrine and the power of godliness.

With the Restoration it became inoperative, all the Acts of the Commonwealth ceasing to bind when the Monarchy was re-established. But the temper of Parliament could not be appeased by the silent supersession of such an obnoxious document. The nation was bound to wash its hands from the stain, and give open proof of the abhorrence with which it regarded the imposition. A decree was accordingly passed, that copies of it should be publicly burnt by the common hangman in Palace Yard at Westminster, at Cheapside, and before the Royal Exchange.

The burning
of the
Solemn
League and
Covenant.

The execution of the sentence was vividly described in the journal of the time:¹ "The hangman did his part perfectly well, for having kindled his fire he tore the document into many pieces, and first burned the preface, and then cast each part solemnly into the flames, lifting up his hands and eyes and not leaving the least shred, but" (regardless of the confusion of metaphor) "burnt it root and branch." The scene was reproduced in the provinces. At Southampton, amidst the firing of cannon and

¹ Cf. "Mercurius Publicus," May 30. "Public Intelligencer," June 6-13.

public rejoicing, the hated scroll was plucked from a neighbouring church, where it had been honoured by a stately setting in a conspicuous position, and thrown into the fire. At Bury S. Edmund's an effigy of a notorious criminal, who had been hanged, was paraded through the streets with a copy of the League fastened under his arm and the Directory in his hand, and, after being subjected to every possible indignity, was torn piecemeal and destroyed.

This Act was followed by another, which expressed even more clearly the conviction of Parliament that terms of union between the contending parties were utterly impossible. The House of Commons brought in "a Bill for Uniformity of Public Worship and the Administration of Sacraments," which rapidly passed its third reading and was sent to the Upper House. With a dignity, however, becoming so grave a step, the Lords declined to legislate while Liturgical Revision was still under consideration.

As soon as the King was informed of the failure of the Savoy Conference, he requested Convocation to take the matter in hand. A committee of eight Bishops¹ was formed, and they carried out the

¹ Wren of Ely, Cosin of Durham, Morley of Worcester, Warner of Rochester, Sanderson of Lincoln, Henchman of Salisbury, Nicholson of Gloucester, and Skinner of Oxford. Cf. "Studies," etc., p. 188.

work in Ely House, but in a far different spirit from what the King desired. Instead of adapting the forms and ceremonies to meet Presbyterian prejudice, they introduced many alterations¹ in a Catholic direction, calculated to make the yoke of conformity more galling than before.

The Act of Uniformity received the Royal Assent May 19, 1662.

The third
disabling
measure.
The Act of
Uniformity.

It was a crisis of almost unequalled import in the history of the Church. The provisions of the Act have been severely criticized on one side, and vigorously defended on the other. Let us look at the spirit of its enactments in their bearing upon the great questions of comprehension and toleration.

i. It was enacted "that all and singular Ministers shall be bound to say and use the Morning, Evening, and all other Common Prayer, in such Order and Form as is mentioned in the said Book. And that every Parson, Vicar or other Minister shall, before the Feast of S. Bartholomew, 1662, declare his unfeigned assent and consent to the use of all things in the said Book;" and further, he was required

¹ The main doctrinal changes were a clearer expression of the priestly character of the Ministry, of the Communion of Saints, of the oblation of the Elements in Holy Communion. Cf. "Studies," etc., pp. 192-196.

to swear that "neither he nor any other person was under any obligation to the Solemn League and Covenant," and "that the same was in itself an unlawful oath, and imposed upon the subjects of this Realm against the known Laws and Liberties of this Kingdom."

ii. "That no person shall be capable of any benefice or presume to consecrate and administer the Holy Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, before he be ordained Priest by Episcopal ordination, upon pain to forfeit for every offence the sum of one hundred pounds."

iii. "That the above Declaration of assent and consent, and the abjuration of the Solemn League and Covenant as an unlawful oath, should be subscribed by every Schoolmaster and Tutor under pain of three months' imprisonment."¹

Of these clauses two were indispensable for the safety of the Church, the third might well have been omitted. It may be that the terms of conformity to the Liturgy were unnecessarily rigid. It might, *e.g.*, have sufficed had they provided that every Minister should undertake to use the prescribed Services to the exclusion of all other Forms,

An impartial estimate of the imposed restrictions.

¹ The above is not extracted word for word from the Act but is a curtailed summary.

without requiring a declaration of unfeigned assent and consent to all and everything contained in the Book of Common Prayer; but to have left any liberty to depart from that uniformity of worship which had been the pride and heritage of the National Church, would have been fraught with peril to the preservation of Catholic doctrine.

Again, it seems difficult to conceive that a Church, whose very Charter involved the belief that her Ministry was derived in unbroken succession from the Apostles through the line of Bishops, could possibly have suffered the continuance in office of men claiming to dispense the Word and Sacraments without Episcopal ordination. Yet further, there was surely no alternative but to ask the Presbyterians, who consented to the Church's conditions, to abjure the Solemn League and Covenant, which pledged them to the extirpation of Prelacy; but no object was gained by imposing upon the Covenanters the humiliation of pronouncing it an unlawful oath and a violation of the laws and liberties of the nation. All that the security of the Church called for was an assurance that it was no longer binding on the conscience. In the provisions of the first and second clauses, therefore, the strings of conformity were perhaps unduly tight-

ened. In the third, it must be confessed, the principle of toleration was wholly disregarded.

The Act was rightly jealous for the maintenance of sincere loyalty to Church principles in all who bore office as public teachers and dispensers of her doctrines and Sacraments; but it was an undoubted infringement upon private rights to forbid that any one should teach in any house or family without a licence from the Bishop, to be granted only on subscription to the terms of the Act.¹ Parliament, however, thought that it was not enough to exact conformity from all who were content to remain within the pale of the Church; it attempted to brand the principles of Dissent as intolerable to the State.

The first result of such legislation was the belief that Nonconformity was necessarily disloyal. If Parliament decreed that the Church and State ought not only to be allied, but that in some sense they were synonymous terms—that every citizen must be a Churchman—a Dissenter became *ipso facto* an object of suspicion and distrust.

¹ It was entirely through the influence of the Commons, in direct opposition to the Lords, that the provision was extended to schoolmasters. Cf. Kennet's "Reg.," 677, which contains an account of the Conference between the two Houses, and the alterations proposed by the Commons in favour of further stringency.

But such was the principle laid down by Parliament, inaugurated a year before, when it imposed the sacramental test for the exercise of a civil office, strengthened by the Act of Uniformity, and enforced with ever-increasing stringency by a succession of enactments, till checked by the Toleration Act of William of Orange, and only erased from the Statute-book in the present century.¹

The severity
of the Act
not due to
the Clergy.

This is the place to call attention to the fact, too often lost sight of, that the yoke of disabilities was laid upon the neck of Nonconformity, not at the instigation of Convocation, but by Parliament; and yet further, that the temper of the House of Lords, in which the Bishops of the Church sat, and were able to make their influence felt, was far more conciliatory than that of the House of Commons; indeed, the Peers had assented to lodge a dispensing power in the King,² which would have largely mitigated the harsh conditions of the Act.

It was not the Clergy³ who persecuted Dissent,

¹ William III.'s Toleration Act was passed May 24, 1688. The Abolition of Tests took place in 1828.

² In their proposed alterations, March 17, they inserted a clause giving a dispensing power to the King for exempting certain beneficed ministers from the penalties of the Act "provided they were of peaceable disposition." It was refused by the Commons, April 10.

³ An exception must certainly be made in the case of Sheldon,

but the laity. It was the national will, as exhibited in the popular Council, that proved intolerant and determined to suppress it.

But what were the effects of this legislation? "Black Bartholomew" witnessed the ejection from their benefices of eighteen hundred Presbyterians, whose consciences forbade them to accept the proffered conditions.¹ Graphic pictures have often been drawn of the scenes in which they took leave of their flocks; compassion and sympathy have been moved in consideration of their sufferings, and all thoughtful men must have dwelt with sadness upon the needless aggravation of their hardships, imposed though the intolerant spirit of Parliament; but the broad fact remains, that a Presbyterian ministry in an Episcopal Church was an usurpation, and a contradiction of principle, which called for immediate removal. Its continuance would have been a sacrifice of a fundamental doctrine of the Catholic Faith.

The immediate effects of the Act of Uniformity.

While, then, we may deplore the loss of men whose who showed himself anything but tolerant. Neal's "Puritans," iv. 353. Seth Ward also was active in promoting the Five Mile Act.

¹ The number of the ejected is a much vexed question. Baxter, "Life and Times," ii. 385, says "about 1800 or 2000 were silenced or cast out." For various estimates, *cf.* Stoughton's "Eccles. Hist.," ii. 540. Hallam's "Constit. Hist.," n. 340.

very consistency of purpose in disregard of self-interest testifies to their worth, men of undoubted piety, in some cases of great ability, we have the answer of a good conscience that they had no legal right to the benefices of which they were dispossessed.

Of the ejected ministers some were satisfied to accept their fate without resistance to the Act, and, entering into lay communion with the Church, they lived as peaceable citizens in their several parishes. Others, however, felt a necessity laid upon them not only to decline Episcopal Ordination, but to continue their ministrations after their expulsion from the churches. This they were able to do only under the greatest difficulty and in constant peril of incurring the full penalties of the Act. The records of Nonconformist worship at this period recall most vividly the tales which Evelyn tells of the condition of the Church during the proscription of the Commonwealth—"the Church in the holes and caves of the earth." Under an overpowering impulse to preach what he believed to be true, many a Presbyterian minister gathered his adherents secretly under cover of night in subterranean chambers and crypts. Proscribed Nonconformists have left monuments of their devotion to what they conscientiously held to be

an imperious duty, in "the Gospel oaks" from which they preached, in retired districts of Cheshire and Norfolk and Cambridgeshire. John Bunyan was wont to gather crowds of followers, after evening had closed in, in the woods round Hitchin, and many a pious service was held where there was no shelter but the oaken thicket, no roof but the canopy of heaven.¹

Parliament, recognizing the embarrassing position in which the Act placed the King, took upon itself to exonerate him from the promises which he had given to the Presbyterians, that "tender consciences" should receive due consideration. They repudiated most vehemently the binding nature of the Breda Declaration, because its pledge of concession was safe-guarded by the condition that Parliament concurred; whereas the result of their debates upon the subject was entirely adverse to a conciliatory policy.² The King, however, felt that he could not acquiesce with honour in the protection which the actual letter of the compact afforded him. His

The King's
efforts to
redeem his
pledges to

¹ Aspland's "History of the Old Nonconformists." Stoughton's "Eccles. Hist.," 315, 316.

² The exact words were: "We shall be ready to consent to such an Act of Parliament as upon mature deliberation shall be offered to us for the full granting that indulgence," viz. for liberty of conscience.

Noncon-
formists.

conscience told him that the Act of Uniformity was a violation of the spirit of his personal pledge, and he resolved to make an effort to redeem it.

Before the year closed, he put out a Declaration¹ in which he maintained that the exercise of a dispensatory power was inherent in the Crown, and expressed his intention, with the concurrence of Parliament, of putting it in force at the earliest opportunity. It appeared to him that, while the members of the Houses of Parliament insisted upon the general principle of the legislation, exemption in matters of detail might be allowed at the will of the Sovereign. But though his language was studiously moderate, it at once aroused the suspicions of Parliament. The least show of concession quickened their animosity, and they lost no time, as soon as they assembled, in drawing up a remonstrance and presenting it to the King. They based their objection upon the ground that the course which he asked them to pursue would stultify their actions; its effect would be nothing less than the repeal of an enactment as soon as it

¹ On December 26, 1662, he promised to procure such an Act "as may enable us to exercise with more universal satisfaction that power of dispensing which we conceive to be inherent in us." "Parl. Hist.," 257.

had become law. They protested also that such a course would foster schism, and bring in increased disturbance rather than peace and order.¹ The King discovered that he had overestimated his influence, and that the feeling of the Commons was so widespread through the country, that persistence in his intention would place him in open antagonism, not only to the Legislative Assembly, but to the great bulk of his subjects. He thereupon took the prudent course of making an apologetic speech, and withdrawing from his position. The speech was couched in most conciliatory terms, but both sides realized that in heart they were in direct opposition to each other.

It was the first outbreak of a conflict which, with the rarest intervals, lasted throughout his reign—the King claiming the Royal prerogative, the Commons resisting it. During the earlier years of the contention they came into collision in the legislation for Protestant Dissent; in the later the opposition of Parliament was based rather upon a growing conviction that the King's toleration was prompted by a desire to encourage Romanism.² In the

The
beginning of
the opposi-
tion of the
King and
the
Commons.

¹ "Parl. Hist.," 262.

² For the former we have the Conventicle Act and the Five Mile Act, for the latter the Test Act.

Acts of Parliament associated with this conflict the student of history must ever feel the deepest interest, and it is to them that the advocates of civil and religious liberty will always look back as the source of all their troubles.

Growing
suspicions of
disloyalty
among
Dissenters.

But the proscription of non-liturgical worship was not the only grievance under which Nonconformists laboured. So soon as the belief was established that Dissent implied disloyalty to the Constitution, suspicions of intrigue and rebellion sprang up at every corner. A system of secret service was set up, and informers busied themselves in bringing prominent Nonconformists to trial. Rumours spread of plots against the life of the King, and men were tried and executed upon the shallowest evidence of guilt and complicity.

In the autumn of 1663 an insurrection broke out in the north of England, in the neighbourhood of Leeds. It was easily quelled, and at another time it would have attracted little notice; but such was the temper of the Government, that it was seized upon at once as a plea for further coercion. Informers maintained that the insurrection had been planned in the proscribed assemblies, and that more stringent measures were necessary for the repression of Nonconformist worship. It led to

the passing of an Act for preventing seditious conventicles, the Preamble of which stated its aim to be the provision of "more speedy remedies against the growing and dangerous practice of seditious sectaries and other disloyal persons, who, under the pretence of tender consciences, do at their meetings contrive insurrections." The Act provided that, if five persons or more besides the household were present at any meeting for a religious purpose, where the Liturgy was not used or the ordinary practices of the English Church complied with, they rendered themselves liable to penalties varying in degrees of severity from fines to transportation.

The fourth
disabling
measure.
The Con-
venticle Act.

Absolute authority to enforce the Act was placed in the hands of any two justices of the peace, or of the chief magistrate of a corporate town, without any check from a jury or a superior court.

When we recall the bitterness of the times, the imagination can easily picture how cruelly such a weapon of oppression would be used by malicious informers and fanatical officers, who lent a willing ear to the most vexatious charges. It was no uncommon practice in the houses of the Puritans to close their social gatherings with family prayer, but it became fraught with danger under such

inquisitorial jurisdiction. Indeed, the dread of the law grew to such a height that, in some districts, where they were closely watched, the master of a house scarcely dared to crave a blessing on his food or give God thanks for it, lest he should incur the penalties of the Act.¹

The student of history will not fail to mark the nemesis of intolerance and persecution in this legislation. It is a repetition almost to the letter of the ordinance of the Long Parliament, which forbade the use of the Prayer-book in any private house or family. In principle the enactments are the same: but in the severity of punishment, as is natural under the impulse of revenge, the second enactment exceeds the first. The Commonwealth was satisfied with a maximum penalty of a year's imprisonment; the Conventicle Act stopped short only at death.²

The year 1664 closed under the gloomiest aspect. The whole population of London was oppressed with

¹ The penalties were three months' imprisonment for the first offence, six for the second, and seven years' transportation for the third. For a magistrate to convict without a jury was regarded as a breach of the principles of the Constitution. Hallam's "*Constit. Hist.*," ii. 349.

² The penalty of death was to be inflicted on any offender who had been transported for a third offence, if he attempted to escape.

a kind of nightmare¹—"a strong and vivid impression that some terrible calamity was impending over the metropolis,"—and their worst forebodings were realized in the eruption of the Plague. The summer following was one of almost unparalleled heat, and when once the disease reached the crowded parts of the city, it raged with irresistible violence. Every one was panic-stricken; the nobility and richer inhabitants fled to their country seats. To add to the prevailing terror, strange comets appeared in the sky. Astrologers seized the opportunity to enrich themselves by ministering to the popular credulity. Wild fanatics wandered through the deserted streets, and rent the air with their passionate appeals. One, like Jonah, constantly cried, "Yet forty days, and London shall be destroyed;" another, naked and bearing above his head a pan of burning coals, went to and fro by night and day, repeating the awful words, "Oh, the great and dreadful God!" The desolation caused by the plague was such that the grass grew in the public thoroughfares; and but for the groans of the dying there was a stillness, as in a city of the dead. The

The outbreak of the Plague.

¹ Cf. Pepys' "Diary," and Defoe's "Journal of the Plague." "Poor Robin's Almanac" and Gadbury's "Astrological Predictions" had great effects upon the popular mind.

mortality was so frightful that no less than one hundred thousand persons succumbed to the disease. It has been truly said, "Never did so many husbands and wives die together, never did so many parents carry their children with them to the grave, and go together into the same house under the earth who had lived together in the same house upon it."

The hardships of Dissenters increased.

Such was the Plague of 1665. One of its unhappy consequences was to aggravate still further the hardships of Nonconformists. Two causes produced this result.

Not a few among the more timid of the orthodox Clergy fled with the richer part of the population, and deserted their charge. Some of the ejected ministers¹ seized the opportunity, and not only offered their services for the dying and the dead, but even occupied the vacant pulpits, and tried to stem the riot and sensuality to which men abandoned themselves in utter despair. They earned the gratitude of the city for what they did, and, when the plague had stayed, it became perfectly clear that their courage and eloquence had regained for them no little of their old popularity. Their

¹ The chief of these were Richard Baxter, and Thomas Vincent; the latter had been ejected from S. Mary Magdalene's, Milk Street. Vast crowds flocked to hear his preaching, and many were deeply moved by it. Ranke's "Hist. of Eng.," iii. 447.

opponents were not slow to realize the necessity of checking at once this revived favour, unless the provisions of the Act of Uniformity were to be permanently abrogated.

Again the Court party were greatly embittered against them, for it was commonly reported that in their denunciations from the pulpit they had openly ascribed the awful calamity to the anger of God for the profligacy and vice of the King and the people in high places. On both these grounds repressive measures were sought for.

It happened at this time that funds were needed to carry on the war which had broken out against the Dutch, and Parliament was asked to vote the supplies. As traces of the Plague still lingered, it was deemed unsafe to assemble at Westminster, and the King summoned the Commons to meet him in the hall of Christ Church, Oxford.

The Session was marked by another coercive measure infringing the liberties of Nonconformists, entitled "the Five Mile Act."¹ It required Dissenting ministers to make oath "that it was not lawful

The fifth
disabling
measure.
The Five
Mile Act

¹ The Statute, though commonly so called, is entitled, "An Act for restraining Nonconformists from inhabiting in corporations." Hallam says, "No severity comparable to this cold-blooded persecution had been inflicted by the late powers, even in the ferment and fury of civil war."

on any pretence whatever to take up arms against the King," and that "they would not at any time endeavour any alteration of government either in Church or State." In default of the oath they were forbidden to live or to come within five miles of any corporate town, or any parish where they had formerly ministered. For every offence there was imposed a fine of £40 or six months' imprisonment. There was an additional proviso that no one who refused the oath should be allowed to act as a teacher of the young or keep a school. It was a cruel injustice, for it took away from educated Nonconformists the only means of livelihood fitted to their position. We can hardly acquit the Legislature of being influenced by a spirit of vindictiveness, quickened by the very associations of their place of assembly; for Cromwell had forbidden the members of the University, who refused allegiance, to come within the same distance of Oxford, and had debarred the ejected Clergy from exercising the office of teaching.¹

It must have been especially galling to the King to have to put his seal to such an Act; but his kingdom was in danger,² and he knew that a refusal

¹ In 1646.

² The Dutch, encouraged by the French, had fitted out a fleet, and were threatening an invasion of the country.

would imperil the grant which Parliament alone could make, and which was imperatively necessary for carrying on the war. It was by no means the only time when he found his freedom fettered; for the extravagance of his Court and his dissolute living kept him so poor that he was left completely at the mercy of the Commons, and his consent was often wrung from him for measures which, had he been free, he would never have conceded.

In a few years the hopes of the Nonconformists revived with the degradation of Clarendon from the office of Chancellor. The construction which he put upon the Declaration of Breda, and his total disregard of their conscientious scruples, kindled against him the strongest resentment of the Dissenters. His gravity and aversion to the fashionable sins, and his open remonstrances with the King for his dissolute life, made him unpopular at the Court. While to the House of Commons he rendered himself obnoxious in a thousand ways, but especially by his endeavours to thwart their resistance to the King's prerogative and dispensatory powers. At last even his Sovereign abandoned him, and he fell from his high estate, was impeached, stript of his official insignia, and condemned to perpetual exile.

The fall of Clarendon, and revival of the Nonconformists' hopes.

In the "Cabal" Ministry, which followed Clarendon.

The Cabal Ministry.

don's downfall, the majority were favourable to religious toleration. Buckingham,¹ whose influence was most largely felt at first, inspired the sects with eager expectations. He placed himself "at the head of all those parties that were for liberty of conscience," and concerted measures of relief from the oppression of recent enactments.

The fire of London, and its consequences to Nonconformists.

The fire of London² gave an additional impulse to their more hopeful prospects. The churches had been burnt to the ground, and the established Clergy were left with no sacred buildings for public worship. The boarded chapels, which they raised here and there for the emergency, showed no outward contrast to the conventicles of Presbyterians and Independents, and where the clergy were lukewarm under the loss of their consecrated sanctuaries, their opponents saw an opportunity of recovering influence. They waxed bold in their adversaries' distress, and gathered congregations to hear their sermons, in perfect confidence that the penalties of the Act would hardly be enforced for worship-

¹ He was anxious to comprehend Presbyterians in the Church, and tried to establish the validity of Presbyterian Ordinations. Cf. "Baxter's Life," iii. 21.

² Evelyn's "Diary" contains a most graphic account of the Fire. Pepys also has left full records of it. Eighty-nine churches were destroyed.

ping in tabernacles while the churches were in ruins.

Baxter has left his impressions of the causes which contributed at this period to the toleration of Dissent in the following terms: "The ministers of London, who had ventured to keep open meeting in their houses, and preach to great numbers contrary to law, were by the King's favour connived at, so that people went openly to hear them without fear. Some imputed this to the King's own inclinations towards liberty of conscience, some to the power of the Duke of Buckingham, some to the influence of the Papists, who were for liberty of conscience for their own interest. Whatever was the secret, it is certain that the great visible cause was the burning of London, and the want of churches for the people to meet in, it being at the first a thing too bad to forbid an undone people all public worship with too great rigour; and if they had been forbidden, poverty had left so little to lose, that they would still have gone on, as in desperation. Therefore some thought all this was done to make necessity seem a favour. Whatever was the cause of the connivance, it is certain that the country ministers were so much encouraged by the boldness and liberty of those in London, that they did the like in most

Baxter's
opinion of
the effect of
the fire.

parts of England, and crowds of the most religiously inclined people were their hearers."

The last
disabling
measure.
The renewal
of the
Conventicle
Act.

But the respite of toleration was of short-lived duration. The Session of 1670 blighted Nonconformists' hopes, for instead of repealing the penal laws it enforced them with greater severity. The Conventicle Act, which had been passed for a limited period, was renewed, ostensibly in a more liberal spirit, for the penalties¹ were reduced; but in reality it proved infinitely more vexatious by the alteration of incidental provisions. It stimulated informers by offering them a portion of the fine in every conviction; it granted a free right of search into suspected houses; and it was followed by an order of the King and Council that all conventicles in London and Westminster should be handed over to the Clergy for the lawful services of the Church.

Every denomination of Protestant Dissenters was affected by these disabling Statutes, and the prisons throughout the country were crowded with sufferers for conscience' sake. Powel, the so-called Apostle of Wales, spent eleven years in gaol at Shrewsbury,

¹ Five and ten pounds were reduced to five and ten shillings. Transportation was omitted altogether. Constables who failed to prosecute after information were fined £5, and magistrates who winked at the offence £100.

Southsea, and Cardiff; Alleyn, the author of the famous "Alarm to the Unconverted," died from the hardships he endured in confinement at Taunton. John Bunyan was shut up for twelve years in the prison at Bedford, where he planned, if he did not actually write, the allegory that has gained him a worldwide fame. But the penalties of coercive legislation fell with the greatest severity upon the Society of Friends. It is a fundamental tenet of their profession that the law of man must always be subordinated to the impulse of the Holy Spirit. In London especially, they glorified in their defiance of the Government; and during the three years that followed the passing of the first Act against Conventicles, they were arrested in vast numbers, and each arrest seemed to arouse a spirit of rivalry in opposition to the Law. Newgate became so crowded, that a fatal pestilence broke out among the inmates. In Bristol, where the Society has always been vigorous, at one period not a single grown-up Quaker was out of prison. Throughout England they were imprisoned by thousands. And now, with the renewal of coercion, the civil officers were again brought into open conflict with this fanatical sect. Knowing what to expect, the authorities mounted a guard of soldiers

Defiant
resistance
of the
Quakers.

at their chief meeting-place in Grace Church Street ; but the Quakers, upon finding themselves forcibly excluded, called upon Penn to preach to them in the open air. The constable was prepared for the contingency, and, producing his warrant, arrested the preacher, as well as his chief supporter, an old Commonwealth commander, Captain Medd.

The trial of
William
Penn.

The trial that followed at the Old Bailey is full of interest,¹ as well for the light it lets in upon the feelings of the Government towards the Dissenters of the time, as for the part it played in the development of civil liberties.

The Recorder of London, supported by an unusual number of Aldermen, the Sheriffs, and the Lieutenant of the Tower, sat upon the Bench to try the prisoners. They were charged with "speaking and preaching to a tumultuous and disorderly assembly, to the great terror and disturbance of the King's liege people and subjects, to the ill example of other offenders, and against the peace of the said Lord King, his crown, and honour." The unjudicial and overbearing conduct of the Bench, the unflinching honesty and courage of the jury, and, more than all, the unexampled dignity of the prisoners at the

¹ For a full account, cf. Penn's "People's Ancient and Just Liberties asserted," and W. H. Dixon's "William Penn, an Historical Biography."

Bar have contributed to place the trial amongst the most celebrated in history. The prisoners were acquitted, but their acquittal aroused a storm of indignation among the magistrates, and the presiding officer rose in his place, and endeavoured to intimidate the jurymen by threats of a heavy fine unless they reversed their decision. When intimidation failed to move them, he threw them into prison, together with the prisoners whom they had tried and refused to convict.

Such a glaring act of injustice was largely reprobated as destructive of the Charter of British freedom, and the prison-doors were immediately unbarred;¹ but this bitter experience turned the mind of Penn from his home, with all its saddening tale of religious oppression, to build up a new Republic under freer laws, where every man should enjoy an equal right to worship God according to his conscience. It was the first germ of an undertaking which quickened and developed, as years went on, till it issued at last in the great State of Pennsylvania.

The effect of the trial upon Penn's future.

¹ The jury brought an action before the Court of Common Pleas, when all twelve judges unanimously declared the imprisonment illegal. Penn was imprisoned again in 1671, and during his confinement wrote his treatise, "The Great Case of Liberty of Conscience."

His father, Admiral Penn, had left claims upon the State for loans and arrears of salary, amounting to £15,000. William Penn proposed to the Government, in discharge of all these, that they should make a grant of land in America.¹ They felt that the removal of any discontent must be beneficial, and that no fears from Nonconformity beyond the seas need be entertained for the throne and constitution, and his petition was conceded. The district that he asked for was bounded on the south by Maryland, on the east by New Jersey, and it stretched across the Alleghanies to the Ohio on the west, and Lake Erie on the north. In the charter of the grant it was called Sylvania, because of the forests with which the land was covered; but the King prefixed "Penn"² to honour the memory of his old friend and admiral.

The foundation of the State of Pennsylvania.

When the patent was placed in William's hands, he exclaimed, in an outburst of satisfaction and gratitude, "God has given it me in the face of the world; He will bless it, and make it the seed of a nation." Crowds of emigrants, some animated

¹ The date of the grant was March 24, 1681.

² He himself says that he suggested "Sylvania," and that he tried every expedient, even to bribing the King's Secretaries, to avoid having "Penn" prefixed.

only by thoughts of commercial interest, many by a longing for the enjoyment of freedom of conscience, flocked to the New Country. Its future capital was planned on a magnificent scale; and thus, out of the religious persecution of the Parliament of England, grew up the second city of the United States, and its name, Philadelphia, bears an abiding witness to the large-hearted love and sympathy of its founder.

III.

The Extension of Disabilities to Roman Catholics, and
the King's Endeavours to counteract them by the
Exercise of a Dispensatory Power.

CHAPTER III.

The Extension of Disabilities to Roman Catholics, and the King's Endeavours to counteract them by the Exercise of a Dispensatory Power.

THE second decade of Charles II.'s reign opened with the first act of the drama which closed with the Revolution. It was preceded by an event that gave promise of a hopeful future, and filled the nation with joy and satisfaction. A triple alliance between England, Holland, and Sweden, to check the encroachments and ambition of France, had been formed at the most opportune moment. Louis XIV. was the representative of despotism, and the champion of the Papacy. England was just experiencing a reaction from the excess of joy with which the Stuart dynasty had been re-established, and a hatred of the Roman religion had become stronger from the open sympathies with it of the heir-apparent to the throne. When, then, the news spread that England had pledged herself to resist the power in which these dreaded principles found their fullest development, it was received with an

The triple alliance formed.

outburst of patriotic enthusiasm. It ministered, moreover, to the national pride, for the treaty was regarded as a master-stroke of policy,¹ and it placed England, for a brief space at least, in the position of influence which she had lost in the Councils of Europe since the Protector's death.

The King's
dislike of it.

But there was one Englishman who felt no satisfaction in the coalition. The King had long been chafing under the restraints that his Parliament imposed upon his independence; and his eyes had turned to Louis XIV. for that pecuniary and military support which would enable him to shake off these constitutional fetters. The French King was the wealthiest in Europe; he could easily supply him with the funds which the Commons refused. The French troops were the finest in the world; by their aid he could quell any insurrection that his projects might raise. To secure this end, therefore, he made no scruple of sacrificing every patriotic interest, and, with a duplicity that set its seal on all his after-reign, he entered into negotiations for a clandestine treaty.

Negotia-
tions for a
secret treaty
with the
French
King.

¹ Pepys characterized it as "the only good public thing that hath been done since the King came into England." Burnet calls it "the masterpiece of King Charles's life," and says that, "if he had stuck to it, it would have been both the strength and the glory of his reign."

He took into his counsels the Duke of York, and two members of "the Cabal," Clifford and Arlington. Their sympathy with all that was Roman was the best security for their secrecy; and they sent their proposals to the King at Versailles. The proposals came as a welcome relief when Louis was smarting under the check to his ambition which the Triple Alliance had created; but he showed no signs of eagerness to embrace them. He consented, however, to despatch an agent over to England, to confer with the King's advisers; and, knowing his weakness, he selected for the office the Duchess of Orleans, and her beautiful maid of honour,¹ the Duchess of Portsmouth, of infamous memory in the later history of Charles's profligate Court. They negotiated and sealed a treaty at Dover on May 22, 1670.²

What must we think of a King who could make such a compact and, with the most unblushing arrogance, confess, at the same time, that he was the

¹ Mademoiselle Querouaille.

² Two copies of the treaty were made; that for the King has been preserved in the family of Clifford, to whom it was originally intrusted. It was kept secret till 1830, when Lord Clifford allowed Lingard to publish it. It is printed *in extenso* in an appendix to his history; Note BBBB to p. 92, in vol. ix. Extracts only had been brought to light before by Dalrymple.

only man in England who desired the alliance? It bound him to declare himself a Roman Catholic at such time as he deemed most expedient, and to employ the whole weight of the English power in support of the Bourbon claims to the throne of Spain; and, in return, he was to receive £100,000 and six thousand French troops to quell any opposition in carrying out the treaty.

The Declara-
tion of
Indulgence.

The expedient time for the declaration of his change of Faith never came, and the secret was concealed till his death; but it coloured much of his public conduct, and had an immediate effect in the issue of "the Declaration of Indulgence."¹

¹ The King's aim is shown by the text: "Our care and endeavours for the preservation of the Rights and Interests of the Church have been sufficiently manifested to the world by the whole course of our Government since our happy restoration, and by the many and frequent ways of coercion that we have used for reducing all erring or dissenting persons, and for composing the unhappy differences in matters of Religion, which we found among our subjects upon our return. But it being evident by the sad experience of twelve years that there is very little fruit of all those forcible courses, we think ourselves obliged to make use of that supreme power in Ecclesiastical matters which is not only inherent in us, but hath been declared and recognized to be so by several Statutes and Acts of Parliament; and therefore we do now accordingly issue this our Declaration, as well for the quieting the minds of our good subjects in these points, for inviting strangers in this conjuncture to come and live under us, and for the better encouragement of all to a cheerful following of their trade and callings, from whence we hope,

This document began with the expression of a strong conviction, forced upon him by the experience of years, that coercive measures in matters of religion were inefficacious; and it stated his determination to exercise that dispensatory power which was inherent in the Sovereign, and had been declared and recognized by Statutes and Acts of Parliaments. In doing this he was resolved to maintain the Church of England in all her rights, doctrine, and government, but he suspended from that day forward all penal laws in force against Nonconformists. He further offered to license places of worship for them, and thus remove every pretence for illegal conventicles, which he believed were the nurseries of sedition. To avoid creating suspicion, and to throw dust in the eyes of the Protestants, he excluded Romanists from the latter privilege, and only sanctioned their meeting for religious purposes in private houses.

But suspicions of his Romeward tendency were not to be turned aside by any such dissembling. A combination of circumstances had fixed the belief

The nation's
suspicions
of the
King's
inclination
to Rome.

by the blessing of God, to have many good and happy advantages to our Government; as also for preventing for the future the danger that might otherwise arise from private meetings and seditious Conventicles." "Parl. Hist.," 515.

deep in the mind of the nation. The Duchess of York had been received into the Roman Faith, and confessed it on her death-bed. The Duke himself, the heir presumptive to the throne, had ceased to make any secret of his adherence to the same Creed, by refusing to join in the Holy Communion in the Royal Chapel. It was rumoured, moreover, that he contemplated a second marriage with the Duchess of Modena, which roused religious antipathies to the highest pitch.

Clifford, again, whose influence with the Duke was so great at this time, had expressed himself strongly in favour of the restoration of the Papacy; and he had even gone so far as to offer to be ordained, on the understanding that he should receive a Cardinal's hat as the reward for his services.

Then, to crown all, came the alliance with Louis, the secret of which had oozed out, and the declaration of war, on a most trivial provocation, with the Protestant State of Holland, within two days of the issue of the King's Edict of Indulgence. All these facts contributed to excite the jealousies of the nation, and to incline them to give the readiest credence to every rumour of Papal design upon the religion of England. Under such circumstances the King's conduct called forth the strongest disapproval, even

from quarters where a cordial reception might well have been looked for.

In Parliament the friends of civil liberty raised a storm of opposition, on the ground that it was a violation of the Constitution¹ and a return to the absolutism from which the Commonwealth had delivered them. But this was not the first condemnation of the Declaration of Indulgence, for Parliament had been prorogued, and could not yet make itself heard. The first discordant note was struck by Dissenters.² Their yearning for religious liberty, which, to all outward seeming, was now within reach of fulfilment, was checked by the realization that they could not enjoy it alone. Toleration for Presbyterians and Independents was toleration for Roman Catholics, and, strong as was their love of liberty, their hatred of Rome was even stronger.

It reflects no little discredit upon such men to find that not a few of them, even on the confession of their own historians, accepted bribes as the price

Opposition
to his
policy.

The attitude
towards the
Declaration
taken up by
Dissenters.

¹ It cannot be denied that a power of dispensation belongs to the King; he may pardon individual offenders, but not suspend a body of statutes or call upon the legal officers to abstain from enforcing them.

² Pepys' "Journal." "Parl. Hist.," 546.

of their acquiescence. Owen, a leader of the Independents, received a thousand guineas from the King's purse for distribution among the malcontents; pensions of fifty and a hundred pounds were offered and accepted; but to the honour of Richard Baxter it is recorded that he "sent back his pension and would not touch it, though most of them took it."¹

Many, who had been imprisoned for conscience' sake, welcomed the release without scruple. They believed that they had suffered unjustly, and did not stay to inquire whether the door was unlocked authoritatively or not.

As many as 470 quakers regained their liberty! No less than 3500 licences to preach were granted to Nonconformist ministers before the year closed, and Owen, Manton, Philip Henry, Oliver Heywood and Baxter were again listened to by undisturbed congregations in legalized conventicles.

One of the last to be set at liberty was the prisoner in Bedford gaol, the author of the "Pilgrim's Progress."

¹ Burnet in the "Hist. of His Own Time," i. 308, says distinctly that this was so, and adds, "The Court hired them to be silent; and the greatest part of them were so, and very compliant." Cf. "Calamy's Life," ii. 469, 470. Stoughton's "Hist.," i. 411.

The full significance of the Declaration was only realized when Parliament was summoned in the spring of 1673. For eighteen months the Government had been carried on without it, and the King would most gladly have postponed the assembling still further, but for the pressing necessity of funds for the war. No sooner were the doors of S. Stephen's opened than the Declaration was denounced in most unmeasured terms, and the King must have realized at the very first sitting, that all attempts to give permanent effect to the Indulgence must be abandoned, if the vote for the necessary supplies was to be secured. He had not met Parliament since the suspicions of the nation had been so violently stirred by the resuscitation of Roman influence; and he found that the opposition which he had encountered in the Commons almost from the beginning had gathered force from the newly developed dread of the Papacy.

It added not a little to his disappointment to find himself unexpectedly robbed of his most powerful ally. All through his resistance to the intolerant legislation of Parliament he had received the support of the great body of Nonconformists; now that the first joy of recovered freedom was subsiding, they realized the price at which their freedom had been

Dissenters
coalesce
with Parlia-
ment in
thwarting
the King.

purchased, and threw their influence into the scale against their liberator. Henceforward the King had to face a Parliament supported by Protestant Dissenters, who united with ready self-sacrifice in a common effort to raise a barrier against the re-ascendency of the hated religion of Rome.

The debate
in the House
of Commons.

When the debates were opened in the House of Commons, the defenders of the Royal prerogative appealed to History in proof that the operation of penal laws had been suspended by the will of the Sovereign; and that proscribed religions, such as that of the Jews or the Walloons, had been distinctly connived at.¹ But it was shewn, on the other hand, that nothing exactly like the claims of King Charles II. had ever been recognized. Individual prisoners had often been pardoned or penalties remitted at the Royal pleasure, but the suspension of a body of statutes and the prohibition to magistrates against putting them in force was without parallel, and would be a most perilous concession. One memorable speech in Parliament will serve to illustrate the feeling that was shared by the majority of members. Love, one of the representatives for the city of London, gave it his most strenuous opposition, and his disinterested conduct has often

Arguments
against the
dispensing
power.

¹ Burnet's "*Hist.*," i. 347.

been held up to admiration. Men accused him of ingratitude for his reception of a measure framed for his own relief, but he defended himself in telling and vigorous terms: "I am a Dissenter, it is true, and thereby unhappily obnoxious to the law; and if you catch me in the corn you may put me in the pound. The law against Dissenters I would gladly see repealed by the same authority that made it; but, so long as it is law, the King cannot repeal it by proclamation. I had much rather see Dissenters suffer by the rigour of legislation, though I suffer with them, than see all the laws of England trampled under the foot of the prerogative, as in this example."¹

The Commons rejected the proposal to ratify the Indulgence by 168 to 116, adding that "penal statutes in matters ecclesiastical cannot be suspended but by Act of Parliament," and this assertion was embodied in an address praying for its revocation. In a fit of indignation the King declared that he would not submit to their dictation; and he was supported by nearly all of his ministers,² who, reviving

¹ For full particulars, cf. "Parl. Hist.," 515-561. Burnet, *ibidem*. Wilson's "Life of Defoe," i. 58.

² "The Chancellor, the Treasurer, Buckingham and Lauderdale, are of opinion to maintain this declaration of the King their master,

the spirit, repeated the advice of the young men at Rehoboam's Court, and persuaded him that concession would be the ruin of his kingdom, but, if only he would assume a determined and authoritative tone, his opponents would come and crouch before him.

The debate
in the House
of Lords.

At last he resolved to appeal to the Lords, hoping to find them opposed to the Commons, and so to be left free, in the face of a divided legislature, to follow his own inclinations. But he failed here also. Clifford, who had lately been raised to the peerage, spoke in vehement denunciation of the Lower House, and characterized their vote as a *monstrum horrendum ingens*. Shaftesbury, upon whose advocacy the King greatly depended, wavered on discovering how strongly the tide of popular opinion was setting against his master, and, dreading the fate which had overtaken Strafford for his support of a failing cause, he turned completely round, to the amazement of the whole Chamber, and agreed to the view which the Commons had taken. The King was immovable; but Louis XIV., fearing the worst from a conflict between the King and Parliament in favour of the Nonconformists; and that if the Parliament persist in their remonstrances, as it is not doubted they will, to dissolve it and call another." Colbert's Letter to Louis XIV., March 9. Dalrymple, ii. 90.

ment at such a time, and dreading the outbreak of civil war, counselled concession, and promised to aid him with men and money hereafter, in recovering the rights which in the exigency of the times he was advised to surrender.

The Declaration was cancelled, and the Houses of Parliament received the King's assurance that what he had done should never be cited as a precedent for the suspension of penal laws.

The King renounces his prerogative of dispensation.

It is said that on this occasion even the House of Lords forgot its wonted gravity, and that the Peers gave vent to their joy by an outburst of cheering; and the streets of London were illuminated in testimony of the people's gratitude.¹

The Commons, elated with success, determined to press their victory over the King to the furthest point. So far back as the opening of Elizabeth's reign, an Act of Supremacy had imposed upon all persons accepting either a civil or an ecclesiastical office an oath, which denied the spiritual jurisdiction of the Pope in this country; but considerable laxity had been shown in administering it, and not a few Roman Catholics found means of reconciling its acceptance to their consciences.²

¹ Dalrymple, ii. 93-96.

² Hallam's "Constit. Hist.," ii. 393. The refusal of the oath

Revival of
the Sacra-
mental Test.

At the Restoration it was revived, with a further proviso that any one was ineligible for a municipal office who had not within the year past received the Holy Communion according to the Rites of the Church of England. It was aimed at Protestant Nonconformists primarily, and was the first civil disability imposed upon that body.

The House of Commons resolved to pass a measure which would exclude Roman Catholic and Protestant Dissenter alike from public office. But though the latter was involved in the restrictions of the Act, the terms for him were not more stringent than in previous legislation. It was against the former that the test now devised was intended to press most severely: it admitted of no evasion; the doctrine of transubstantiation was one of fundamental import, and the House resolved that the renunciation of this in full and positive terms should be an absolute and indispensable qualification for bearing office, whether civil or military.¹

involved the penalties, but none were imposed for neglecting to administer it.

Peers were exempted by a special provision.

The Test Act made it compulsory to make the declaration within six months after assuming office.

¹ In the first proposals there was no mention of the transubstantiation test; and after its introduction it was opposed by the

A too feeble remonstrance was raised against the principle of employing what was only a speculative opinion in matters of Faith as a fitting test for the discharge of secular functions, and it was suggested that such a course would inevitably encourage the worst kind of hypocrisy. Subsequent history has abundantly proved the soundness of the objection; but, such was the temper of the times, it was put on one side as not worthy of debate, and the Bill was quickly passed through both Houses without even a division. The absence of any serious difference of opinion and the rapidity with which the Bill passed into law, suggest a vivid contrast to the long and stormy debates that preceded its repeal. The Test Act, as it was called, remained in force all through the eighteenth century, and, after dividing politicians into two bitterly hostile camps through the first quarter of the present century, was only erased from the Statute-book shortly before the Reform Bill of 1832.¹

A contrast between the temper of the nation at the enactment and at the repeal of the Test Act.

It is interesting to trace the causes which facilitated its progress through Parliament.

First, the opposition of the King and Court party Court Party. It was proposed on February 28, and was read a third time on March 12. "Parl. Hist.," 556, 561. Its title was "a Bill to prevent the Growth of Popery."

¹ In 1828.

The causes
that facilitated
such
legislation.

was far less vigorous than against any of the previous disabling Acts. The logic based upon considerations of money, to which Charles II. was always more or less prone to listen, proved irresistible at this juncture. He was literally driven by impending bankruptcy to acquiesce in whatever the Commons proposed, for they positively refused to grant him the necessary supplies, except at the price of his submission.

A second cause was the unexpected support accorded to the Bill by some of the leading Roman Catholics. It owed its origin almost to Arlington, who made no scruple of sacrificing his religious creed to a scheme of ambition by which he hoped to supersede his more conscientious rival, Clifford, as Prime Minister.¹ In the Upper House opposition was disarmed by the unexpected advocacy of the Earl of Bristol, an ardent Roman Catholic. He appealed to the House in most vehement language to pass it, as a measure of relief from the dangerous and unfounded panic which had seized with such mischievous effect upon the nation. He cleared his conscience, however, by expressing his intention to

¹ He was however disappointed, for when Clifford resigned under the Act, the King, doubting his firmness, passed him over in favour of Sir Thomas Osborne, afterwards Earl of Danby.

vote against it himself, if it was brought to a division; but such disinterested patriotism must be viewed with suspicion, when we find that he persuaded the Peers to introduce a proviso exempting himself and his family from the obligations of the test.¹

The third cause was the unreserved acquiescence of the Protestant Nonconformists.

Though it was openly admitted that the Act was aimed at the Papists, yet it touched Nonconformists, and in a vital part; for they regarded communion at an Anglican altar with little less abhorrence than the Roman Mass.

The promoters of the Act, however, in their eagerness to purchase Nonconformist support, dangled before their eyes the prospect of a Bill of Relief,² which should revoke the penalties and

¹ He professed to object to the Bill only on grounds of certain expressions contained in it; not of its principles. He introduced another proviso which secured a large pension to himself and his wife from the Crown. His influence on the House is much to be wondered at. Lingard, ix. 114.

² The "Country Party" looked upon the concessions to Dissenters with distrust, and contrived to prevent the Bill from becoming law. A variety of questions touching the amount of relief, and the description of the class of Dissenters to receive it, occupied the House till Easter, when Parliament was adjourned, and, before the time for reassembling, it was prorogued. "Parl. Hist.," 535-575.

manifold disabilities under which the Protestants laboured through this and previous enactments. Their hatred of Romanism was so intense, that they offered themselves willing victims: but they lived to rue the day of their too confiding policy; for, though an attempt was made to afford the promised relief, Parliament was prorogued in the middle of the debates, and the legislative restrictions, which they had helped to lay upon themselves remained untaken away for five generations.

The
immediate
results of the
Act.

Now, what were the immediate consequences of passing the Test Act? No measure ever brought about more startling results. Clifford at once gave up the seals of office: a vast number of officers, both in the Army and the Civil Service, followed his example; even the Duke of York could not escape its penalties. The King hoped and believed that, rather than lose his office as Admiral of the Fleet, he would accept the Sacramental Test, for as yet he had made no open declaration of the change of his faith, but he was then too conscientious for such a concession. Owning himself a convert to Romanism, he brought all his commissions, it is said, with tears in his eyes, and resigned them into the King's hands.

The command of the Navy was intrusted to Prince Rupert, and the feeble manner in which he handled a most formidable force of ninety ships in the war that followed, may be regarded as the firstfruits of this ill-considered legislation; and it must have excited in the minds of all true patriots real regret that a religious test should have robbed the country of a more competent Admiral.¹

The number of resignations, however, gave no relief from the deep sense of distrust that pervaded the nation. It proved, men thought, in the most convincing manner, the existence of the danger against which the Act was framed. The tide of unpopularity set strongly against the King, whom the people believed to be the author of all their troubles. Shaftesbury exactly expressed their sentiments, when he said, "There is not a person in the world, man or woman, that dares rely upon the King, or put any confidence in his word or friendship."

At the opening of Parliament in 1674, the King made a desperate effort to reinstate himself in the confidence of his subjects. With his own lips he

The
hypocrisy
the King.

¹ The Prince fought three engagements with the Dutch fleet under De Ruyter, but, notwithstanding the strength of his force, he gained no victory.

spoke thus: "I know you have heard much of my alliance with France, and I believe it has been very strangely misrepresented to you, as if there were certain secret treaties of dangerous consequence, but I will make no difficulty of letting the treaties, and all the articles of them, without any the least reserve, be seen by a Committee of both Houses, who may report to you the true scope of them."

It was a deliberate falsehood—the culmination of the duplicity in which he had been living ever since the secret compact entered into at Dover; but it met with no success, for the people wholly refused to give any credence to his testimony or to lay aside their fears. Indeed, their fears seemed even to grow in intensity till they experienced a momentary relief a few years later, through the marriage of the Prince of Orange to Mary, eldest daughter of the Duke of York, and presumptive heiress to the British Crown. William was a Protestant in Faith, and such an alliance, coming at the height of the anti-Papal outcry, delighted the nation beyond measure, and allayed the panic.¹

The marriage of the Princess Mary.

¹ William agreed to the marriage on October 19, 1677, and it was celebrated on November 4, "to the great joy of the nation, for his highness being a Protestant Prince, this match in a great measure expelled the fears that the majority had conceived concerning Popery." Reresby's "Memoirs," 199.

But the respite was of the briefest duration. Almost immediately afterwards the whole country was thrown into an unprecedented state of fermentation by the discovery of what is known as the The Popish Plot. Popish Plot.

The Government received information¹ that the Jesuits had been the authors of the terrible fire, which had laid half London in ashes; that they had formed a conspiracy for the murder of the King, and that their intention had been to assassinate him in the confusion of the conflagration, but that the conspirators had been disarmed by witnessing his great sympathy with the sufferers, and his efforts to relieve them; yet further, the Government was assured, that the Pope had arranged for the complete establishment of the Roman religion in England, and had even nominated certain individuals to the Bishoprics and other important dignities of the Church.

This astounding charge rested upon the unsup- The author of the Plots.

¹ Titus Oates deposed, among other things, that the Jesuits in New Castile had offered £10,000 to the person who should assassinate the King: that the King of France was to give 40,000 stands of arms to the Irish Roman Catholics; that the Fire of London, which was due to the Jesuits, had been carried out at an expenditure of £14,000, that eighty-six men had been employed as incendiaries, and seven hundred fireballs had been used. For full particulars of the Plot, *cf.* Burnet, i. 424, *et seq.*

ported evidence of a single person, Titus Oates. His antecedents were such as should have excited the gravest suspicions of his veracity. By birth the son of an Anabaptist minister, he had joined the Church of England, had been ordained and presented to a living, but was shortly after indicted for perjury, and subsequently on a charge of gross immorality. After this, he sought admission into the Roman Church, for the sole purpose, as he did not scruple to confess, of spying out and betraying the secrets of the Jesuits.¹

Such a history was presumably not one to supply satisfactory credentials of trustworthiness; but an affidavit made in the presence of a city magistrate, Sir Edmund Berrie Godfrey,² and repeated in the

¹ Eachard, iii. 461.

² There has been a strange misrendering of his name, founded on a belief that it was somehow associated with Bury St. Edmund's. Burnet speaks of him as "Edmond-Bury," Evelyn calls him "Edmonbury," Hume "Edmondsbury," Macaulay follows him, and Green continues the mistake. The following extract from the *Gentleman's Magazine*, furnished to me by Beckford Bevan, Esq., of Bury, will show what is right:—

"His godfathers were my cousin John Berrie, Esq., Captain of the Foot Company of the town of Lidd, . . . his other godfather was my faithfull loveing friend, and my neighbour sometime in Grubstreet, Mr. Edmund Harrison, the King's embroiderer. . . . They named my son Edmund Berrie, the one's name and the other's christian name." "Diary of Thomas Godfrey," Harl. MSS. Article in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for Nov. 1848.

presence of the Council, carried immediate conviction to their minds of the truth of his story. The informer was subjected to a close cross-examination in the presence of the King and his brother, the Duke of York, and his evidence was so shaken,¹ that the whole imposture would have been exposed, but for two circumstances which occurred most inopportunately, both tending to re-establish the credit he was on the point of losing. One was the violent death of Sir Edmund Berrie Godfrey. He was found dead in a field near Primrose Hill, with his sword run through his heart. The other was the discovery of a treasonable correspondence between the Duke's secretary and the Court of France.

The least investigation would have shewn that there was no connection between the letters and the Jesuits' plot; and that Sir Edmund Berrie Godfrey must have died by his own hand: but the popular mind was in too excited a state to believe anything but the worst.

The body of "the Protestant martyr," as he was called, was laid out in state, for the public to view the work of the Jesuit assassins, and it excited still

¹ He betrayed an entire ignorance of places that he had named as resorts of the Jesuits; and when asked to describe Don John, whom he said he had known in Spain, he said that he was spare and tall, whereas the very reverse was the fact.

further the passions of the crowds who flocked to his death-chamber.

The panic spread over every class of the community. The Clergy¹ were carried away by it. Dr. Lloyd, at St. Martin's, the most frequented of the London churches, preached the funeral sermon, and fanned the suspicion to burning heat. With a dramatic effect, he placed at his side in the pulpit two stalwart Protestants, to protect himself against the Papists, who were ready, he believed, to rise up and attack him for his denunciations.

The Houses of Parliament seem to have lost their reason, and they listened to the tales of Papist machinations, which one speaker after another alleged, till they became so infatuated and alarmed, that they passed a Resolution, in what strikes the modern ear as very unparliamentary language: "That there existed a damnable and hellish plot, contrived and carried out by Popish recusants, for assassinating the King, for subverting the Government, and rooting out and destroying the Protestant religion."²

¹ It is said that as many as four hundred clergymen attended the "lying in state," and that a thousand persons of position accompanied them.

² On November 1 this resolution passed the Commons, and it was subsequently agreed to by the Lords.

The Government at once took measures for the safety of the Capital, as though the invaders were already at the gates! Patrols of soldiers paraded the streets by night and by day; the military and the trained bands were kept under arms; the houses of Roman Catholics were placed under surveillance; and it was said, not without a spark of ridicule and humour, that, but for these precautions, all the citizens might rise the next morning to find their throats cut!

Public precautions against the outbreak of the Papacy.

The only person who kept his head in this reign of terror was the very man against whom the attacks were said to be levelled. The King entirely refused to share the people's fears, and expressed his surprise with no little scorn, that his subjects should "suffer themselves to be made the dupes of a bold and brazened impostor."

Such was the condition of the public mind, when the trials of the suspected conspirators commenced. The attempt to bring home the origin of the great fire to the Jesuits completely failed, for there was not a tittle of evidence, save the self-accusation of a poor distracted lunatic, whom no one believed to be guilty, though they condemned him to be hanged.

The trials of the supposed conspirators.

Nothing, however, would satisfy the popular passion till, in despite of the most manifest contradiction,

they had inscribed the unfounded charge on the pedestal of the monument erected to commemorate the outbreak of the conflagration.¹

No less than two thousand suspected traitors were flung into prison. Coleman, the Duke's secretary, was the first to be brought up for trial.² He was

¹ The following inscription was written on the Column by order of the Court of Aldermen, June 23, 1681: "This Pillar was set up in perpetual remembrance of the most dreadful burning of this ancient City, began and carried on by the treachery and malice of the Popish faction, in the beginning of September, in the year of our Lord 1666, in order to the carrying on their horrid plot for extirpating the Protestant religion, and old English liberty, and introducing Popery and slavery."

The words were erased in the year 1685, but during the mayoralty of Sir Patience Ward, September 16, 1689, "Mr. Chamb'laine and Mr. Comptroller" were ordered to see that they "be again set up in their former places."

This record of the Pillar remained undisturbed until after the passing of the Act for the relief of His Majesty's Roman Catholic subjects, April 13, 1829. On the 6th of December, 1830, the Court of Common Council ordered that the Committee of City Lands be instructed to cause to be erased from the inscription on the Monument, the words "*sed furor papisticus qui hæc dira patravit, nondum restinguitur*"; and also the above inscription—"This pillar was set up," etc. This resolution was begun to be carried into effect on the morning of Wednesday, January 26, 1831, when Mr. Charles Pearson, Mr. Richard Taylor, and Mr. Frederick Thornhill, attended, with the workmen, and were the first to commence the complete erasure of the inscriptions.

Cf. "Monument of the Fire of London," p. 13.

² The jury found him guilty, on December 2, 1678, and he was

no doubt a busy intriguer, and to extricate himself from pecuniary embarrassments he had offered his services to the King of France, for the promotion of the Roman Catholic cause; but there was nothing to implicate him in the suspected conspiracy, unless one read between the lines with Protestant spectacles of the strongest power. This, however, was what the judges did, and he was summarily executed on a charge of high treason. The sentences passed on the prisoners.

Ireland, Grove, and Pickering were the next to be brought to the scaffold, without a word of convincing evidence to incriminate them.¹ Three others perished in the same way, and then the work of reckless injustice ceased, but only for a time. It broke out with renewed force against men in a higher position of life, whom the information asserted to have been nominated to the great offices of State under the establishment of a Papal Government. Five Roman Catholic peers, Arundel, Powys,

hanged and quartered on December 3. For full particulars of this and the other cases that followed, cf. "State Trials," and Eachard's "Hist. of the Plot;" also Salmon's "Critical Review of State Trials," 325-328.

¹ They, in common with the other prisoners, professed that they were "innocent as the babe unborn." The familiar use of this figure led people to believe that there was some equivocation in the expression. Rapin, ii. 697; Salmon, "Crit. Rev.," 328-330.

The trial
of Stafford.

Bellasyse, Petre, and Stafford, were impeached, but the country shrank from inflicting the extreme penalty, and sent them to the Tower. It was not long, however, before the desire for bloodshed sprang up afresh; and it was determined to put Lord Stafford on trial for his life. He was selected mainly as being incapacitated by age and inferior abilities for making a strong and successful defence. The Court sat to try him in Westminster Hall, and everything was ordered to recall the scene of Strafford's arraignment. The King and Queen had thrones placed there, on either side of the Lord High Steward: the Lords and Commons were provided with seats: the foreign ambassadors and every important personage in the State were present. A committee of the Lower House was intrusted with the impeachment, headed by one who forty years before had filled the same office at Strafford's trial, and all the great lawyers of the day were retained for the proceedings. "I think," says the recorder of the annals, "it was the deepest solemnity I ever saw." Witness¹ after witness

¹ The chief were Dugdale, Oates, and Tuberville. The defence set up was an impeachment of the character and credibility of the witnesses, which had little weight with the judges. No real attempt was made to refute the evidence in detail. Stafford was beheaded December 29, at the age of sixty-eight. "State Trials." Salmon, "Crit. Rev.." 396-408.

testified against the prisoner; but though, as we read the evidence with an unbiased judgment, it is such as to fill us with shame for the honour of the highest court of justice in the land, the accused could with difficulty obtain a hearing.

It leaves an ineffaceable blot upon the Church of that day, that a Bishop, who knew the truth, forebore to speak it in contradiction of a perjured witness; for it is said that, "urged by conscience on one side, and deterred by fear on the other, he consulted his friends, whether he was bound to come forward in defence of the innocent at the risk of bringing upon himself the vengeance of the Commons, and they resolved the case in favour of his timidity."¹

After seven days of prolonged incriminations and a scornful reception of Stafford's defence, a majority of thirty-one of his fellow-peers, each laying his hand upon his breast and appealing to his honour, pronounced the prisoner guilty, and condemned him to death. It is some satisfaction to know that though the Houses of Parliament and the highest

¹ Lloyd, Bishop of S. Asaph, was the religious instructor of Tuberville, and could have refuted his evidence had he not been afraid. His mouth was stopped by the opening speech of the counsel for Tuberville, in which certain threats were uttered against the Bishop. Lingard, ix. 243. Burnet, ii. 258.

judges in the land, unmoved by the noble spirit of his pleading, and the majesty of innocence which asserted itself in his whole bearing, had pronounced him guilty, yet the crowds of spectators, which gathered on Tower Hill, bared their heads when he denied his guilt on the scaffold, and cried out that they believed his word. With his last breath he predicted that the time would come when his injured honour should be vindicated; but it was not till the reign of George IV. that the attainder was annulled, and his heirs were restored to the prerogatives of their house and name.¹

Roman
Catholic
peers ex-
cluded from
the Upper
House.

During the excitement of this anti-Papal panic, a Bill was brought forward in Parliament which introduced fresh disabilities. Shaftesbury determined to turn the popular fears to account, and to force on a measure for the exclusion of Roman Catholic Peers both from Parliament and the Privy Council of the Sovereign. When the Test Act had passed five years before, Peers of the realm had been expressly exempted from its provisions; it was now

¹ A Bill for reversing the attainder was passed in the Upper House, and read twice in the Lower, in 1685, but other important business stopped the final passing, and it was postponed. After James's abdication, the Roman Catholics were not in a position to demand reparation, and justice was not done for a hundred and forty years. Stat. 5 Geo. 4. c. 46.

proposed to make the religious qualification the same for both branches of the Legislature. A seat in the Upper House had been the prized possession of every baron, from the time when the order was gathered together by the Saxon and Norman Sovereigns; once summoned by the King, into the noble body of councillors, nothing but a judicial sentence passed at the bar of his Peers could exclude its possessor from his hereditary right.

The profession of the Roman religion was henceforward to entail the forfeiture of this cherished prerogative. The Bill provided that no one should sit or vote in either House till he had taken the oaths of allegiance and supremacy, and subscribed a declaration that the worship of the Church of Rome was idolatrous. It passed through the Commons without opposition: the Lords resisted, dreading the invasion of their constitutional rights, and fearing that it might be used as a dangerous precedent; but they were soon overborne by the vehemence of popular opinion and yielded.

The disability thus imposed on Roman Catholic Peers, under the impulse of a frenzy that almost bereft the nation of its senses, was not removed till a century and a half had elapsed. One exception, and one only, was made; it was proposed and

The Duke of York exempted by the Act from its provisions.

of carried, though only by a majority of two votes, that the Duke of York should be exempted from the operation of the Bill.¹ The exemption was violently resented by the people, and contributed not a little to the embitterment of the Protestant party at the time when Stafford was put upon his trial.

At the general election, which followed, the feeling against Rome and the Duke was so intense, that candidates had but little chance of success, unless they pledged themselves to resist the Papacy with might and main.² The House of Commons was filled with Protestant Whigs, and they lost no time in redeeming the pledge they had given to their constituents. A resolution was at once brought forward for disabling the Duke from succession to the British throne.³ A desperate attempt was made by the advocates of exclusion to inflame the passions

¹ "Parl. Hist.," 1040.

² The hostility to the Duke was so great that he was obliged to leave the country before Parliament met, March 6, 1679.

³ The Bill passed the second reading in the Commons and was in Committee, when the King, fearing the consequences, prorogued Parliament on May 26. It reassembled on August 14, and, after a long debate, the Bill "for securing the Protestant Religion, by disabling James, Duke of York, to inherit the imperial Crown of England, Ireland, and the dominions and territories thereunto belonging," passed the Commons, on November 15.

of the House, and to avoid even the semblance of opposition, in view of overawing the Lords and forcing their assent. The traitor Dangerfield was placed at the bar of the House, and asked to reveal what he knew of the Popish Plot. Notwithstanding the knowledge that "he bore the accumulated infamy of sixteen convictions upon his head, though his testimony had been rejected by three successive juries," every word that he said was believed; and, when he solemnly affirmed that all the dire machinations of which so much had been heard were contrived with the privity of the Duke, and to place him at once upon the throne, the resolution for disabling him from succession to the throne was accepted without a single dissentient voice. When framed in the shape of a Bill, it was carried in the Commons with a tumult of applause, that revived in the older members of the House the memories of "forty-one," and filled them with grave apprehensions of a repetition of the tragedies of that fateful year.¹

In the Upper House the issue of the debate hung upon the influence of the two great orators of the day, uncle and nephew, Shaftesbury and Halifax.

The debate
in the Upper
House.

Shaftesbury had the advantage of speaking on the popular side, and pleaded that the prerogatives

¹ "Life of James II.," i. 617.

of the Crown were really the rights of the people; that the rights of the people might never be sacrificed to preserve the succession even of a most favoured prince, much less for one whose religious opinions filled them with suspicion and fear.

The King himself was present, and seeing the apparent hopelessness of the struggle for his brother's prerogative, he expressed his willingness to surround the succession with safeguards and limitations for the security of the religious liberty of the country; his cue was taken up by others, and the principle of restriction pushed to such an extremity that its acceptance would simply have changed the Monarchy into a Republic.

Then Halifax rose on the opposition side. Alike by his genius, his powers of wit, and the beauty of his voice and oratory, he had made himself "the delight of the House:" but he even surpassed all expectations; rebutting the arguments of Shaftesbury, and exposing the revolutionary nature of the suggested limitations on the Royal prerogative, he so swayed the minds of his audience, that the Bill was thrown out by a majority of thirty. It was a debate long remembered, for the historian of the times has described that 15th of November as "one

of the greatest days ever known in the House of Lords.”¹

The Bishops of the Church formed half of the majority, and they have often been attacked for their seeming disloyalty to the religion of the nation. It is difficult for this generation to pass a dispassionate judgment upon them; because they lived in an age when the Church and the Monarchy were held to be inseparable: when the Divine right of kings was not a pious sentiment, but a cardinal principle of the faith—a very ark which could only be touched to the dishonour of the King of kings; and so, though they were second to none in their dread of a Roman revival, their conscience forbade them from interfering with the Royal prerogative of succession.

The part
taken by the
Spiritual
Peers.

At the same time, it deserves to be remembered that they left no stone unturned for insuring the safety of the Anglican Faith, by what they believed to be the only legitimate means—by striving to wean the heir to the throne from the cause which

¹ Reresby's "Memoirs," 103, 104. Macaulay, i. 258, quotes a remarkable testimony from a very rare book, "A noble Lord appeared against the Bill, who, that day in all the force of speech, in reason, in arguments of what could concern the public or the private interests of men, in honour, in conscience, in estate, did outdo himself and every other man."

The Bishops
attempt to
convert the
Duke of
York.

he had espoused. Among the records of the times there is scarcely anything more touching than the appeal of the Bishops to the Duke, to forsake the fellowship of the Church of Rome. Sancroft and Morley, the Primate and the venerable Bishop of Winchester, as representing the Episcopal order, obtained the assent of the King to try what argument would do on the lips of those who had defended his imperilled rights at the most critical juncture. They obtained an interview with the Duke, and the Primate addressed him in a carefully studied speech, mingling compliments and rebukes, appeals to feeling and reason in the strangest combination: but it was labour lost and ingenuity wasted. He listened, but with manifest signs of impatience, and then merely apologized that he was too illiterate to enter into controversy with professed theologians, and too much occupied by the pressure of secular business, even if he possessed the necessary ability.

The King
exercises
freely his
dispensing
powers.

Parliament was dissolved the year after the rejection of the Bill of Exclusion, and met no more during the lifetime of the King. For the time that remained he determined to govern by prerogative alone, and, in the exercise of his sovereign power, he set at defiance the disabling Acts of Parliament

which he most disliked. The imprisoned Peers whom the Commons had lodged in the Tower were released; the Duke of York was reinstated in his office as Admiral of the Fleet, and introduced by the King himself into the Council-chamber, from which the Test Act had excluded him; and endless petitions for the issue of writs for a fresh election were sternly refused.

But the King's personal rule was not for long, The King's death-bed. for his end was approaching. His death-bed scene in the palace of Whitehall has been often painted, let us hope it may never be re-enacted. After a Sunday spent in all the dissipation for which his Court has become a byword, amidst "inexpressible luxury and profaneness, gaming and profligacy, and, as it were, total forgetfulness of God," which Evelyn tells us he should never forget, the King was struck down with apoplexy.¹ The Bishops² were summoned

¹ "Diary," February 4, 1685.

² Besides the two mentioned here, the Bishops of London, Durham, and Ely were invited to assist the King by their spiritual advice. When the Duke saw that His Majesty persistently refused the offers of the Bishops to administer the Holy Eucharist to him, he requested those present to withdraw, and then asked the King if he should send for a priest, to which he replied, "Yes, for God's sake, brother, do, and lose no time." He answered, "Sir, though it cost me my life, I will bring one to you." He at once summoned Father Huddleston. The Duke told the King that he had saved his life after the Battle of Worcester, and now came to save his soul.

to his bed-side to awaken him to repentance; they passed through the antechamber, where everything that met the eye—the dissolute concubines weeping for their lord, the besotted courtiers, who had barely shaken off the effects of their revel, the gaming-tables of basset and the bowls of usquebaugh still unremoved, bespoke the life of unbridled sin which they were called to rebuke, ere it for ever closed. But the weighty exhortations of Sancroft, warning him of his speedy appearance before the eternal Judge, and even the persuasive appeals of the pious Ken, who spoke now as a man inspired, under the deepest sense of an awful responsibility, could do no more than evoke a languid confession of what he had done amiss. At last his favourite mistress, the Duchess of Portsmouth, revealed the secret, which the King had confided to her, of his long promise to be admitted into the Church of Rome. Thus the veil of hypocrisy, which he had worn for fifteen years, under which he had not scrupled to sacrifice the lives of friends and ministers, was torn away; and at the hands of a Benedictine monk he received the rites of Communion and Extreme Unction; and then closed a life of wasted opportunities, disastrous to the liberties of the nation, and a shame and dishonour to the kingly name.

IV.

The Social Status and the Influence of the Clergy
during the Reign of Charles II.

CHAPTER IV.

The Social Status and the Influence of the Clergy during the Reign of Charles II.

It has been spoken of as a reproach to the Church, that she should have chosen to hamper the work and ministrations of Nonconformists, by the imposition of civil and religious disabilities, at a time when she herself was apathetic and wholly insensible to the awful responsibility of her high vocation.

The injustice of the reproach will be made apparent when we have passed in review the condition and influence of the Church, from the Restoration to the close of the King's reign. Two historians, one living at the time we treat of, the other in our own generation, but both powerfully swayed by political bias and prejudice, have set themselves to depreciate the Clergy of this period to the very lowest point. The onesidedness of Burnet has been so often and so indignantly exposed, that we need not dwell upon his aspersions.¹ Macaulay's exaggerations demand

Unfair
estimate of
the clerical
character
taken by
some
historians.

¹ Cf. Salmon's "Impartial Examination of Bishop Burnet's

a closer attention, alike from the brilliancy and interest of his writing, as from the fascinating power he possessed of carrying conviction to the minds of his readers. His description of the Clergy of the Caroline age is very familiar; indeed, it is the part of his history most widely known.

"The clergy were regarded as on the whole a plebeian class; indeed, for one who made the figure of a gentleman, ten were mere menial servants."

"The sacerdotal office lost its attraction for the higher classes; scarce a single person of noble descent took orders."

"A young Levite"—such was the phrase by which the chaplain was then known—"might be had for his board, a small garret, and ten pounds a year. . . . He might not only be always ready in fine weather for bowls, and in rainy weather for shovelboard, but might also save the expense of a gardener or of a groom. Sometimes the reverend man nailed up the apricots, and sometimes he curried the coach-horses. He cast up the farrier's bills. He walked ten miles with a message or a parcel. He was permitted to dine with the family;

History," and "Lives of the English Bishops." North's "Examen." Ranke's "Hist. of Eng." Carwithen's "Hist. of Eng.," etc.

but he was expected to content himself with the plainest fare. He might fill himself with the corned beef and the carrots; but as soon as the tarts and cheesecakes made their appearance, he quitted his seat, and stood aloof till he was summoned to return thanks for the repast, from a great part of which he had been excluded." Again, after strong insinuations of most questionable morality, Macaulay says that "the nature of the matrimonial connections which the clergymen of that age were in the habit of forming is the most certain indication of the place which the order held in the social system."

Once more, he pours contempt on them for their ignorance by suggesting that the rural clergyman's Study contained nothing but "a concordance and an inkstand."¹

Now, all this would have been a perfectly true picture, if it had been made to represent the exception, and not the rule. There can be little doubt that Macaulay sought materials for his description,

The sources
from which
Macaulay

¹ "Hist. of England," i. 326-333. This estimate of the clerical character has been severely criticized by Dr. Churchill Babington, in a book entitled, "Mr. Macaulay's Character of the Clergy in the Latter Part of the Seventeenth Century considered," published by Deighton, 1849. It is known that he has collected materials for a much longer treatise, and it is hoped that the public may reap the benefit of his interesting research ere long.

drew his
materials.

not in the sober records of the times, but in the lampoons and caricatures of writers who pandered to the popular taste of a licentious age, by holding up the Clergy, who rebuked it, as a butt for ridicule and contempt.¹

Because Beaumont and Fletcher, Shadwell, or other comedians courted popularity by making their clerical characters contemptible,² when the Church was hateful to the world, their writings no more afford a true index of clerical influence or of the clerical status, than Trollope's novels describe the real dignitaries of the Church, or the exaggerated caricatures of the modern curate which enliven the pages of the *London Charivari* would convey to future generations a fair estimate of the self-sacrifice and laborious efforts of the Anglican priesthood in the latter half of the nineteenth century.

Directly we leave the testimony of the stage, and irreligious and atheistical libels, and turn to sober-minded and unbiased authorities, we find that every one of these pictures was greatly overdrawn, often wholly incorrect.

¹ The chief source of his information was Eachard's "Grounds and Occasions for the Contempt of the Clergy and Religion enquired into." It is described as "a series of jocose caricatures."

² Cf. Fletcher's "Scornful Lady," and Shadwell's "Lancashire Witches," in both of which the Clergy are made to marry into the lower grade of society.

What says the famous Dr. South about the contempt of the Clergy? "Call a man a priest or a parson, and you set him, in some men's esteem, ten degrees below his own servant. But let us not be discouraged, either with ourselves or our profession, on this account. Let the virtuosos mock, insult, and despise on; yet they shall never be able to trample a pearl into a pebble, nor to make sacred things contemptible, any more than themselves, by such speeches, honourable."¹

The contradictory evidence from other writers.

And this testimony is echoed by a contemporary, who says that never, since the world stood, were there holier souls or braver Clergy.²

And yet once more, another writer indignantly repudiates the charges of the Deists against the Clergy of a few years later, and appeals to God in affirmation of his belief that, whether in talent, in learning, or in uprightness and moral rectitude, the theologians of the Anglican Church had never been surpassed.³

The learning of the Clergy.

And when, at this day, we go into any theological library, and look at the long line of works that

¹ On the groundless causes, upon which Church rulers are despised. Sermon on Tit. ii. 15. Vol. i. p. 139, ed. 1823.

² Dixon's "Nature of the Two Testaments," ii. 619.

³ Hughes' "Prefatory Essays to S. Chrysostom's Priesthood," p. x. quoted by Babington.

stand on the shelves, written by the Caroline divines—Barrow, Jeremy Taylor, South, Bull, Beveridge, Patrick, Wall, Grabe, and a host of others—we see with what justice they received the highest encomium that was probably ever passed on any class.—“*Anglicanus clerus stupor mundi.*”

Their
devotion.

Further, if we turn from purely theological works to spiritual and devotional literature, we are confronted by the fact that no other period in the Church's history can compare with the Caroline age either for the fertility or the vigour and strength of its productions.¹

Their powers
of preaching.

Again, what period can boast such illustrious preachers?² Is it not true that divines from the continent flocked to this country to learn the art of preaching? Even the anti-Church writer, Eachard, admitted that the English people had the “best sort

¹ Note especially Lake's “*Officium Eucharisticum.*” Towerson's “*Of the Sacraments in general.*” Comber's “*Companion to the Temple.*” Scott's “*Christian Life.*” Patrick's Devotional works, and many others, as any one may see at a glance in Overton's “*Life in the English Church,*” 1660–1714, pp. 261–295.

² Barrow, who was said to have exhausted every subject he handled, South, than whom no one could strike harder, whose sermons unite wit and wisdom in the happiest combination, Ken, whom the people flocked to hear, whose simplicity and earnestness and deep pathos moved his hearers to tears, Stillingfleet, Tillotson, Beveridge, and Patrick, form a goodly array, and they by no means exhaust the list.

of oratory in the greatest perfection ;” and Addison eulogized the sermons of his day, as “the best in the world.”

How was it, then, if this be a true estimate of the power existing in the Clergy of that generation, that their influence was not more widely or deeply felt ?

The reason is not far to find. The fault lay not in themselves, but in the circumstances of the times in which their lot was cast.

The causes
of their
failure in
moral
influence.

Let us look at two phases of religious life—the standard of Church worship, and of general morality. The fanaticism of the Commonwealth had left such a frightful heritage of neglect and ruin, that immediate restoration was absolutely impossible. Time and patience alone could repair the breaches and build up the walls. Everything of architectural ornament or ecclesiastical art had been swept out of the churches with the besom of destruction. The Articles of Enquiry issued by the Bishops, fill us with horror for the desecrations they betray ; and the records of the Visitations of their dioceses read like the story of Nehemiah’s progress round the walls of Jerusalem after the desolation of the Captivity had laid everything in ruin.

The cathedrals,¹ by reason of their surpassing

¹ Cf. Mackenzie Walcott’s “Traditions and Customs of Cathe-

splendour, were the special objects for iconoclastic fury; but the churches which had any pretence to beauty rarely escaped. Those in Suffolk, which are the pride of the Diocese of Ely, were so frightfully mutilated that they became unfit to be regarded as "Temples of God," and the sordidness of the sacred buildings in other parts of the diocese is sorely lamented by the Bishop of the time.¹

The ruin
caused by
the great
fire.

Then came the terrible fire of London to make confusion worse confounded, and destroyed eighty-nine churches altogether, including the magnificent cathedral of St. Paul; and the rebuilding of these, and the restoration of "the Exemplary Churches" throughout England, absorbed so much of the wealth of the Bishops and pious laity, that little was left for country parishes.

The Sacraments had almost fallen into disuse.²

drals." A frightful tale of disorder may be read in Overton's "Life of the Eng. Church," 158-162.

¹ Cf. Evelyn's account of a journey through Suffolk, quoted by Overton; also Bishop Turner's Letter to his Clergy in 1686.

² Cf. Sherlock's "Practical Discourse," in which he testifies that "most people looked upon Baptism as a very needless and troublesome ceremony." The best proof of the rarity of the Celebrations is to be found in the "Country Parson," where even the model priest is said to celebrate, at the most, only five or six times a year. One Bishop says of two country parishes he knew, that the Holy Communion had hardly been celebrated there for several years. Trelawney's Letter to Sancroft.

Baptism, if administered at all, became a private ceremony. Holy Communion had been rarely celebrated, save at the greatest Festivals; and the Altar, being seldom used for its high and holy purpose, was too often neglected; in some places it was even treated with shocking irreverence, for persons were used to sit upon it, and in one church it is actually recorded that it was used as a card-table.¹

Neglect of
Sacraments.

Then we must not forget that this neglect was not the result of a mere transitory wave passing over the country, but that it had lasted for twenty years, and a whole generation had been born and had grown up in the midst of it, with no knowledge of anything higher or more ennobling.

It is when we realize all this, that we feel the injustice of writing bitter things against the Clergy of the Restoration. We are rather prompted to thank God for having raised up a ministry so eager to repair the awful waste, and restore to the Church something of its historic beauty of worship.

The Bishops' Articles of Enquiry bristle with questions, and their Charges are full of stirring exhortations, touching the duty of bringing back the daily Services throughout the country.² Witness

The Bishops'
efforts to
redress the
evils.

¹ "Grenville's Remains," ii. 70.

² Cf. the Visitation Articles of Cosin, Sancroft, Patrick, Stillingfleet, and Turner.

the insistence of the injunctions of the Bishop of Ely, in 1686: "Have morning and evening prayer every day of the week in your Church. . . . If by any means in the world you can prevail with at least a few of your parishioners, which sure cannot be wanting in most parishes, where there are some devout gentry and persons of quality, or at least some piously disposed people; and to all such I could almost kneel, begging them to do their parts towards so good a work, perhaps the best and the most public good they can ever do in the places where they live."¹

This injunction might easily be supported by other illustrations, both for the same practice, and especially in reference to the promotion of greater reverence, of which latter the revival of the old traditionary custom of bowing to the Altar may be taken as a typical instance.

Samuel Wesley speaks in praise of the practice,² and it is inculcated frequently in the devotional manuals of the Caroline period. Indeed, in this matter, especially in cathedrals, where it is well-nigh extinct, we fall far below that generation, for we have abundant evidence that it was the

¹ Letter to his clergy, 1686.

² In "The Athenian Oracle," iii. 483.

general rule in "the Exemplary Churches" of the land.¹

But how are we to reconcile the low standard of moral purity in the people with this estimate of the devotion of the Clergy? They were placed face to face with overwhelming obstacles to success. A sudden emancipation from the severity of Puritanism plunged the nation into all the licence of unrestrained libertinism. Cromwell and his followers had adopted a religion which shut out all worldly enjoyment, and robbed life of the sunshine of innocent social pleasures and amusement. It was an artificial standard which could not last; and when men who had lived under an iron rule of such rigid austerity found the fetters unexpectedly struck off, they suffered their liberty to degenerate into licentiousness, and would brook no interference, even from the appointed guardians of morality. The hatred of Puritanism became so intense that many a man acquiesced in a lower standard of morals simply from fear of being identified with its principles.

But this was not all. The Court led the reaction. Instead of employing that tremendous influence which it is the prerogative of the throne to exercise for good, and which is simply immeasurable when

The overwhelming difficulties of the clerical position.

¹ Cf. Mackenzie Walcott, 136.

the throne is occupied by a popular king (and no Sovereign was ever more popular than was Charles II. at the time of the Restoration), it was exercised wholly for evil. The Court became a byword in Europe, and was more dissolute perhaps than any ever known, saving that of Louis XIV.; and the people, "drawing foul ensample" from those in high places, became frightfully corrupt. No wonder then, when we realize the gigantic hindrance to religion created by these causes, that the Church made but little impression during the years that followed the Restoration; but though the Court remained utterly depraved to the end, no one can study the inner life of the nation without seeing that the standard reached in the last year of Charles II.'s reign was many degrees higher than that of the first.

V.

The Absolutism of James II., and his Efforts, Secret
and Overt, to restore the Papacy.

CHAPTER V.

The Absolutism of James II., and his Efforts, Secret and Overt, to restore the Papacy.

JAMES II., like his predecessor, began his reign with protestations that were never carried out. Charles II. made at least an attempt to keep his promises; James stopped short even at this.

The new
King's
professions.

His brother had scarcely breathed his last, when he summoned the Privy Council, and expressed in their presence his loyalty to the Church and Constitution. He would support, he said, and defend the Church of England, because it was always in favour of the monarchy; and he would ever respect the Laws, because they were sufficient to make him as great a king as he could wish.¹ His motives were not very high-minded, but the Whigs were growing too weak to offer much resistance, and the Tories (the terms were first introduced about

¹ Kennet's "Reg." 420. Evelyn. Feb. 4, 1685.

this time,¹ to designate the two great parties in the State), were two much elated with satisfaction to criticise his professions. Whatever fears they had before were now completely removed, and, in a transport of delight, they cried out that they had "the word of a King, and of a King who was never worse than his word;" and one, more eager than the rest, declared, that the speech "ought to be written in letters of gold." The speech was not reported at the time, but afterwards, when the necessity for an

¹ Whig was a term used in the west of Scotland for a sour liquor:—

"With leeks and onions, whig and whey,
I must content me as I may."

BRETON'S *Works of a Young Wit.*

It was also applied to the people who drank it. A large body of these conceived an intense hatred of Episcopacy, murdered their Primate, and rebelled against the Government. They were attacked and defeated by the Duke of Monmouth, at Bothwell Bridge. The name given to these Presbyterian zealots was after this contemptuously applied to those politicians in England who favoured Dissent and opposed the Court.

Tory is of Irish origin, first used in Queen Elizabeth's time, to signify a robber. "They are ruder than Tories and wild Americans," Glanville's "Serm.," 212. It is derived from the Irish *toree*, "give me your money." It was applied at this time in England to politicians who were supposed to be ruining their country by their Papist proclivities, professing their readiness to accept a Roman Catholic King, rather than give up their belief in hereditary right and passive obedience. In lapse of time these names of reproach changed into titles of honour: "the Irish savage grew up into the fine gentleman; the sour whey became the richest cream." Cf. Eachard, Defoe, Malone, and Macaulay.

accurate version was realized, one of the Councillors said that it had impressed him so deeply, that he could repeat it "word for word." His report was shewn to the King, and endorsed by him as substantially correct.¹ James lived, however, to regret the attestation; and subsequently tried to shield his conduct by a subterfuge, asserting that he had intended to promise that he would not alter, not that he would support, the Established Religion, and that he was prepared to defend those who professed the Anglican Faith, but not the Faith itself.² It will, however, be abundantly shewn that, even on the most charitable interpretation of his words, the promise was grievously broken. Almost every public act relating to the Church illustrates its falsification, and gives evidence of his determination, from the very beginning, to introduce the Roman Religion.

Look at his attitude towards the Rites and Ceremonial of the Church.

Hitherto he had been satisfied to worship in private, and he had avoided giving offence by hearing Mass with closed doors. Almost within two months of his Accession he ordered a magnificent Celebration on Easter Sunday, attended with all the

His first movement towards the public adoption of the Roman Ritual.

¹ Finch, the Solicitor-General. Kennet, 427.

² Clarke's "Life of James II.," ii. 3.

pomp and circumstance of a State ceremonial. The most important civil dignitaries and officers were commanded to be present, and all was performed to the smallest detail in accordance with the Ritual of the Church of Rome.

The
Coronation.

A few days later followed the Coronation. The fact was regarded with no little popular favour that his selection fell upon the Festival of S. George, the patron saint of the nation. Within the Abbey all the secular part of the ceremonial was carried out to the letter in accordance with ancient precedent; indeed, so strictly was it adhered to, that the forms observed on this occasion have been accepted as the model for subsequent Coronations. But there was one element in the religious observance, of immemorial antiquity, which was excluded from the order of the day. "To the sorrow of the people"—they are words from Evelyn's Diary,¹—"no Sacrament as ought to have been." And yet another, of no little significance, was wanting—there was no presentation of a copy of the Bible, which the English Church is wont to place in the hands of the King, to teach him how he may best fulfil his kingly office, for the good of the people committed to his care.

¹ Evelyn, April 23rd.

The nation at large, in their enthusiasm for the person of the King, were indifferent to such deviations from honoured customs; but in the minds of sober men they awoke fears and suspicions, and made it a day not of joy but of sadness.

Soon after his Accession, the King laid the foundation of a private chapel, to be built with unwonted magnificence; it was consecrated in the second year of his reign, with the Roman Ritual;¹ yet further, a few days afterwards a Bishop received consecration within its walls at the hands of the proscribed Jesuits; and such was the surprise at the absence of any public remonstrance, that the Diarist writes, "I could never have believed that I should live to see such things in the King of England's Palace."

Again, in his progress through the western counties, after the suppression of Monmouth's Rebellion, he made no scruple of introducing an alien ceremonial, in touching for the king's-evil.²

¹ It was consecrated at Christmas, 1686. There is a full description of it in Evelyn's "Diary," December 29th.

² The legend said that Edward the Confessor was endued with a supernatural power of healing by touch. He first exercised it in 1058. In the reign of Charles II. the practice reached its height, and no less than 92,000 persons were touched. Queen Anne frequently exercised it; and, in 1712, Dr. Johnson, when a boy, was touched by her for the evil. The custom was finally abandoned by

Touching for
the king's-
evil.

Ever since the time of Edward the Confessor, upon whom the legend said the gift of healing had been miraculously bestowed, the act of touching had been accompanied by religious rites; since the Reformation they had been stript of all that was essentially Roman; but on this occasion a Jesuit priest, Father Huddleston, officiated, and setting aside the reformed use, substituted a service for the Intercession of the Blessed Virgin. The breach of custom must have been very flagrant, for the gentle Ken, Bishop of Bath and Wells, who was officially required to witness the ceremony, but feared to interrupt it (so many were eagerly awaiting the expected cure), immediately afterwards mounted the pulpit of the Abbey, and denounced the Roman heresy in vigorous terms.

What prompted the prosecution of Titus Oates and Richard Baxter.

We pass now to look at some of his secular acts, which manifest the same inclination in favour of the Roman party. The trial of Titus Oates for perjury was brought on at once, not so much for the praiseworthy purpose of bringing an unprincipled scoundrel to justice, as for giving satisfaction to the King's co-religionists.¹

Westminster Hall was crowded with Roman George I. in 1714. Pepys' "Diary," June 23, 1666. Lord Braybrooke's notes to the same.

¹ "State Trials." Salmon's "Crit. Rev.," 530-544.

Catholics to witness the proceedings. Though but few persons believed any longer in the prisoner's evidence, the suspicions of the Popish Plot had by no means wholly passed away; there still lingered in some quarters an indefinite sense of distrust, lasting on "like the swell of the waves after a storm at sea." The King hoped by the trial to allay it altogether, and at the same time to enable the Roman party to enjoy in the fullest manner the sweets of revenge. Nothing but this latter motive can explain the sentence that was passed upon the culprit. He was to be whipped from Aldgate to Newgate, and again from Newgate to Tyburn; and if he should survive, to be imprisoned for life, coming forth from his dungeon only five times in the year, to be placed in the pillory in different parts of the city. And the sentence was carried out in the same vindictive spirit in which it was passed. The public executioner lashed him with such severity,¹ that it was evident to every one that he was under special orders to do it; and when men interceded with the King to remit the flogging on the second day, his answer betrayed his thirst for revenge: "He shall go through with it, if he has any breath left in his body."

The vindictive character of the sentence passed on Oates.

¹ A bystander is said to have counted 17,000 lashes.

The trial of
Baxter.

But there was yet another trial, wholly unlike as touching the character of the accused, though an almost exact reflection of it in the spirit in which it was carried out. Richard Baxter was the impersonation of the Protestant cause in England. He had been thrown into prison for certain strictures, introduced into his Commentary on the New Testament, upon the injustice of persecuting Dissenters ; and one of the King's first acts was to bring him to trial. In the fresh flush of his imperious tyranny, he seized upon this offence as a means of overawing the Protestant party and terrifying them into submission.

On this occasion the Court was filled with a far different audience ; at the first trial the prisoner was surrounded by enemies thirsting for revenge ; at the second the accused, wherever he cast his eyes, save at least on the Bench, looked upon men who deeply sympathized with his sufferings.¹ But Jeffreys was the judge appointed to try him, and the King felt that there was no need for the Court to be packed, for the judge knew his master's wishes and might be relied upon to carry them out.

¹ Evelyn, May 7, 1685. Baxter was supported by the eminent Dr. Bates ; Pollexfen, the famous barrister, entered heartily into his cause. Calamy's "Life of Baxter," xiv. Neal, v. 4, 5.

We can imagine the thrill of horror that must have run through the assembly when the counsel for the defence asked for a postponement of the trial, and was answered by the judge: "I would not give him a minute more to save his life. Yonder stands Titus Oates in the pillory, and if Baxter stood by his side the two greatest culprits in England would be standing together." Every attempt to set up a defence was immediately crushed; the accused in despair essayed himself to address the Court, but was checked at once by the Chief Justice: "Richard, Richard, dost thou think we will let thee poison the Court? Richard, thou art an old knave; thou hast written books enough to load a cart, every one of them full of sedition. . . Hadst thou been whipt out of thy writing trade forty years ago it had been happy for thee! Thou pretendest to be a preacher of the gospel of peace, and thou hast one foot in the grave; it is time for thee to begin to think what account thou intendest to give. . . I know thou hast a mighty party. . . but, by the grace of God, I will crush you all."

The over-
bearing
conduct of
Jeffreys.

We need not pursue it further: Baxter was found guilty, and Jeffreys would have sentenced him to be whipt at the cart's tail, but such a frightful injustice was averted by the rest of the judges. He was

The sentence
upon Baxter.

left to languish in gaol, till the King, having alienated the Church, completely altered his course, and strove to conciliate the Protestant Nonconformists, and bribe them to connive at his Romeward policy.

The King
determines
to dispense
with the
Test Act.

The first year of his reign had not closed when James determined to override the provisions of the Test Act. So long as this was in force there was no probability of the Roman form of religion progressing far beyond the precincts of his own immediate household. The officers of the Court, the ministers of State, every one holding a commission in the Army and Navy, all were bound to receive the Holy Communion according to the Anglican Rite, and to declare their abhorrence of the doctrine of Transubstantiation. The King was sufficiently alive to popular sentiment to know that there was no chance of getting the Act repealed, so he satisfied himself with a free exercise of a dispensatory power.

Now, the Parliament which assembled in November, 1685, was, perhaps, the most obsequious ever known; and if only the King had avoided touching them in their most sensitive part—that is their religious belief,—he might have bent them to his will in everything connected with his State policy.¹ But

¹ Many circumstances had contributed to place the elections in the hands of the Court party. When the King read the names of

he overestimated his influence; and in his first speech expressed his intention of using that prerogative of dispensation which he conceived to be inherent in the Crown. Indeed, he was bold enough to say that in some instances he had actually done so, and had issued commissions in the Army to Roman Catholic officers. His justification was a plausible one, viz. that he could not rob himself of tried soldiers. "The gentlemen, I must tell you, are most of them known to me; and having served me on several occasions, and always approved the loyalty of their principles by their practices, I think them now fit to be employed under me; I will deal plainly with you—after having had the benefit of their services in such time of need and danger, I will expose neither them to disgrace, nor myself to the want of them, if there should be another rebellion make them necessary to me."¹ Now, the Test Act was regarded as the only safeguard under a king of an alien Faith; it was the confidence which that Act gave that led the nation to acquiesce with calmness in the accession of James II. His open confession, therefore, that he had nullified its

the members returned, he said that there were not forty that he could in any way object to. "Parl. Hist.," 1298, 1343. Burnet, i. 626.

¹ Rapin, 752.

The
resistance of
Parliament.

conditions, fell upon their ears with an alarming shock, and the Commons addressed a remonstrance to the Crown; but, inasmuch as they accompanied it with a grant of the additional revenue, which he had asked for, he felt that he could afford to disregard their objections.

The Commons petitioned against the King's conduct, but he answered with considerable warmth, "I had reason to hope that the reputation God has blessed me with in the world, might have created and confirmed in you greater confidence of me, and of all I say to you." Coke, a leading Whig, called upon the House not to be scared from doing their duty by any high words, but such was the obsequiousness of the Parliament, he was committed to the Tower for disrespect to His Majesty.

In the Upper House the King's conduct was more severely censured, and it deserves to be mentioned that the Spiritual Peers, headed by Compton, Bishop of London, were foremost in opposition.¹

It was at this critical juncture that an event occurred on the Continent which largely developed the growing mistrust and suspicions of the English

¹ In consequence of the part he took in this debate he was deprived of the Deanery of the Royal Chapel, and of the office of Privy Councillor.

nation. Louis XIV. revoked the Edict of Nantes. It had been the one guarantee for religious liberty to the Protestants of France, and for ninety years had enabled them to live and worship in comparative peace and security.¹ Furthermore, it had been declared by the King, at its first proclamation, to be perpetual and irrevocable. But the most despotic of monarchs cared nothing for such a solemn obligation, and revoked it under circumstances of the utmost barbarity.

The effect in England of the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes.

In the midst of the excitement consequent upon King James's speech to Parliament, England was startled by an overwhelming influx of foreign refugees fleeing in terror from the persecution which the King of France had thus suddenly let loose. No less than half a million were driven into exile, and fifty thousand found shelter in this country. They were cordially welcomed by the people, but received harsh treatment at the hands of the King. One of the refugees² had described

¹ It was issued by Henry IV., King of Navarre, in 1598, and secured to the Huguenots their civil rights and the free exercise of their religion, and gave them equal claims to all offices with the Roman Catholics. It was fairly observed till the Peace of Nimeguen, after which Louis began to oppress them, under the influence mainly of Madame de Maintenon.

² Claude, one of their most eminent ministers.

The King attempts to check the national sympathy for the refugees.

in vivid language "the inhumanity of Louis and the wrongs of the sufferers." James regarded such language as a libel upon his ally, and commanded the book to be openly burnt by the public hangman. And then he went on to an act still more oppressive, and well-nigh intolerable alike to his own subjects and to the refugees. The national sympathy for the exiles had expressed itself in one of those magnificent subscriptions which so often do honour to the heart of England in times of distress: £40,000, an unparalleled sum, if we consider the circumstances of the times, had been raised for their relief; but the King was determined to divert it from its purpose, from his hatred to their creed. The Huguenots would have been Dissenters had they lived in England; they disliked the Anglican Ritual as much as the Puritans did. The King knowing this, issued an order that none would be eligible for the public bounty unless they received the Sacrament in accordance with the established Use. Conceive of such a proposition emanating from one who was using every effort—and at that very time—to repeal the Test Act. It is strange, indeed, that men's eyes were not opened to his purpose; but more and more outrages upon their feelings were needed before their infatuation could be destroyed.

The second year of the King's reign opened with two acts which manifested his determination to disregard constitutional limitations and make himself absolute.

The King determines to make himself absolute.

The first was one of open resistance to the decision of Parliament, touching his power to dispense with the Tests. The second was the revival of the High or Ecclesiastical Commission.

When the two Houses declined to sanction his conduct in removing the disabilities under which Roman Catholics laboured, he resolved to have recourse to the Courts of Law. He appointed Sir Edward Hales, a Romanist, to a colonelcy in the Army, and then brought a collusive action against him in the name of his servant to recover the penalty incurred for a violation of the Test Act.¹ The right which James II. claimed had been the subject of an animated debate in the previous reign. Charles II. had exercised it; but, seated on his throne, in the presence of Parliament, he had renounced the prerogative with his own mouth, and promised that what he had done should never be drawn into a precedent in after times.² In the face

A collusive trial to test his dispensing power.

¹ Salmon's "Crit. Rev.," 566-571. Burnet, 669. Welwood, 172. Rapin, 755.

² Cf. *supra*, p. 48.

of this it was difficult to see how the trial could issue in favour of the King; and he realized this when he consulted the Chief Justice. "I am determined," said the King, "to have twelve judges who shall be all of my mind in this matter." "Your Majesty," answered the Chief Justice, "may find twelve judges of your mind, but hardly twelve lawyers." He saw that his only chance was to pack the Bench; six of the judges were removed, and among those raised to the vacant seats two were Roman Catholics. The trial lasted for five days, when the decision was given by eleven of the judges in favour of the King's dispensing power; the single dissentient is believed to have been bidden to withhold his assent in order to deceive the public and give an appearance of impartiality to the judgment.¹ The decision was pronounced in terms that would justify the most imperious absolutism, and overthrow the whole fabric of national freedom. "The kings of England," they said, "are sovereign princes; the laws of England are the King's laws; therefore, it is an inseparable prerogative of the Crown to dispense with penal laws in particular cases, for reasons of

¹ The dissentient was Baron Street, a man of infamous life, who would readily lend himself to such an act of deception. Clarendon's "Diary," December 27, 1688.

which it was the sole judge. It was the ancient remains of the sovereign power of England, which never yet was taken from them, and never could be."¹ Thus the King won his suit, but it carried him many steps nearer to the Revolution, which drove him from his throne.

The second act, by which he strove to intimidate the Church, was the resuscitation of the High Commission. The project was vehemently opposed, but the King was obstinate. Seven Ecclesiastical Commissioners² were armed with supreme inquisitorial and judicial powers. Their authority was set above all existing laws and statutes. They were invested with power to exercise all manner of jurisdiction in spiritual and ecclesiastical matters. They were to search for and call before them all ecclesiastical persons, of what degree or dignity soever, and to punish the offenders by excommunication, suspension, or deprivation. They were further empowered to call upon all colleges and schools to produce their statutes, and, if they thought fit, to amend and alter them, as they deemed convenient. The Court had

The revival
of the Court
of Ecclesi-
astical
Commission.

¹ Rapin, Welwood, *ibid*.

² Archbishop Sancroft, who, however, refused to sit. Bishops Spratt and Crewe, with Jeffreys, Rochester, Sunderland, and Herbert. Any two of them, in company with Jeffreys, were commissioned to act.

Prohibition
of contro-
versial
preaching.

been first created under Elizabeth,¹ but by its tyranny and oppression had become so obnoxious to the nation, that it had been abolished in the reign of Charles I.,² and declared to be incapable of revival for evermore. Such was the weapon, however, with which this arbitrary monarch resolved to arm himself for the destruction of the Anglican Church. And it was quickly called into use. The open countenance given to Rome drew forth a vast deal of controversial teaching, especially from the pulpits. Foremost among the defenders of the Anglican Faith was the pious Bishop of Bath and Wells, Thomas Ken; and such was the power of his eloquence and the force of his reasoning, that, it is said, the service which preceded his sermon was frequently interrupted by the impatience of the crowds to hear his voice.

The King soon realized that, if the minds of men were to be constantly inflamed by such impassioned harangues, the object of his wishes would never be attained. As supreme ordinary, he issued directions that all controversy on doctrine should immediately cease, and that the least allusion to differences of creed should be made a penal offence. Of course there were men then, as always, whose consciences

¹ First year of her reign, 1559.

² July 5, 1642.

would not suffer them to hold their peace. Sharp, Dean of Norwich and Rector of St. Giles's-in-the-Fields, was appealed to by one of his flock to satisfy his doubts that the Anglican Church was a true branch of the Catholic Church of Christ. It was a call that could not be denied; and he answered it publicly from the pulpit.

The sermon was reported at Whitehall, and kindled the Royal displeasure. The Bishop of London at once received directions to suspend him from his living, but refused. Whereupon the Bishop himself was peremptorily cited to appear before the new Tribunal of Ecclesiastical Commissioners, and forthwith suspended from his Episcopal functions.¹ The country was appalled at the injustice.

The King proceeded to make another advance in favour of the Papacy, by the revival of the religious Orders of the Roman Community. Monks once more, after a banishment of a century and a quarter,² were

The
Religious
Orders
revived in
London.

¹ The arbitrary character of the Court was at once seen. The Bishop demanded to hear the terms of the Commission read: Jeffreys answered that he might buy them in any coffee-house for a penny. He made a strong defence, but was suspended, September 6, 1686. The same sentence, too, was passed upon Sharp, but was taken off in a few days. Salmon's "Crit. Rev.," 571-573.

² Rigorous statutes against the Jesuits were in force, and had been for several generations. "Every Jesuit who set foot in this country was to be hanged, drawn, and quartered. Whoever was suspected

seen in the streets of London to the amazement of the population, who hitherto had only heard of them by the hearing of the ear. The Benedictines were installed in St. James's; the Jesuits established a school in the Savoy; a chapel was assigned to the Franciscans in Lincoln's Inn Fields, and the Carmelites were provided with a settlement in the city.

In the popular mind nothing was more closely associated with the religion of Rome than Monasticism. Riots broke out in the metropolis, and the Popish scare spread to the provinces.¹ It was all in vain that the Jesuit School was opened on undenominational principles; the people would not be persuaded but that the teachers at the Savoy would make converts to their Faith. The Jesuits had obtained a great reputation in their scholastic work,² and the country awoke to the danger of leaving them in undisputed possession of the education of

of being a Jesuit might be interrogated, and if he refused to answer, sent to prison for life." Macaulay has shewn that these laws were rarely put in force, but they had this effect, that Jesuits never appeared save in disguise. It was the complete throwing off of this which so startled the people.

¹ Great difficulty was experienced in quelling them, as the police and trainbands sympathized with the rioters. "No wooden gods" was the popular cry.

² Bacon, in his "Advancement of Learning," Works, vol. ii. p. 60, ed. Montague, 1825, testifies to the value of their system.

the young ; and the people gave practical expression to their fears by an outburst of benefaction, the fruits of which are still being reaped in the great charity schools of the metropolis and of England at large.¹

From London the King turned his thoughts to the Universities, which have ever played an important part in all the religious movements and revolutions of history. He anticipated but little, if any, resistance ; for their addresses bespoke a spirit of almost abject submission, and carried the principle of passive obedience to the farthest point. The very name of Charles acted like a spell in Oxford, and Cambridge was little less loyal to the Stuart cause. Both had suffered terribly at the hands of the Puritans, and hailed the Restoration with unmitigated delight. But there were limits even to their loyalty : they revered the King, but they revered law and conscience even more. When, then, James II. sent a Benedictine monk, Alban Francis, with a mandate to the Vice-Chancellor of

Interference
with the
affairs of the
Universities.

¹ The Blue Coat School in Westminster was probably the first of these. It was erected in 1688. Bishops Patrick and Tenison founded a school in S. Martin's in the Fields as a counteracting influence to the Jesuit School in the Savoy, April 23, 1688. There were other foundations of individual Churchmen at this period ; but the system was fully developed by the S.P.C.K. after 1698, and in six years there were upwards of fifty such schools in London alone.

The Vice-
Chancellor
of Cam-
bridge
deprived.

Cambridge to admit him to a degree, without being sworn by the customary oath, there was nothing to be done but to reject him, and risk the result of the Royal displeasure.¹ The Vice-Chancellor was cited before the new Court of Commission, and deprived. Nothing remarkable occurred in the trial, unless it be that Sir Isaac Newton was one of the counsel retained for the defence,² and was treated by the overbearing Jeffreys as though he were an ordinary barrister hardly worth listening to, instead of being, as he was, the greatest professor of science and natural philosophy in all ages and of all nations. It is when we think of such a man subjected to scorn and insolence, and driven out of court with the profane injunction, "Go your way and sin no more, lest a worse thing happen unto you," that we realize the tyrannous injustice of the King's supremacy.

¹ The mandate was sent in February, 1687, and the Vice-Chancellor, Dr. John Pechell, was summoned to appear at Westminster on April 21. Salmon, 573.

² Eight distinguished Cambridge men were chosen to support the head of the University, but it does not appear that Newton spoke; but he with the rest of the delegates was scoffed at by Jeffreys, who addressing them at the close of the trial, said, "Most of you are divines; I will therefore send you home with a text of Scripture, 'Go your way and sin no more, lest a worse thing happen to you.'" Salmon, *ibid.*

At Oxford, matters were carried even with a higher hand. Magdalene College was the most richly endowed community in Europe.¹ Its president died in March, 1687. The King issued a letter requiring the society to elect one Anthony Farmer, a convert to the Roman religion, and a man of most profligate living, "any statute or custom to the contrary notwithstanding." The fellows were determined in their refusal; and though the Commission which sat to try the case saw fit to withdraw Farmer from the candidature, by reason of his admitted immorality, they insisted on the election of the King's nominee.² But the society chose a president³ who was duly qualified in every respect according to the Statutes, and refused entirely to violate the sacred pledges which they had severally given at their own elections. They were ejected

¹ In Henry VIII.'s reign the revenue was upwards of £10,000 a year. It was commonly said that when the leases fell in it would reach £40,000. Burnet, i. 697. Macaulay, ii. 286.

The King himself went down to Oxford and summoned the Fellows before him. He made Parker President; Charnock, the only Fellow who had expressed a willingness to accept his authority, Vice-President; and filled up the rest of the fellowships with Papists. On Parker's death, immediately afterwards, Bonaventura Giffard, a Roman Catholic Bishop, was put into the Presidentship.

² Dr. Parker, Bishop of Oxford.

³ Hough.

The Fellows
of Magda-
lene College,
Oxford,
deprived.

from their fellowships, and, as an added insult, to satisfy the anger of the King, were pronounced incapable of holding any preferment in the Church. Magdalene College was turned into a Roman Catholic foundation. It was an open dishonour to the University, and an act of shameful ingratitude to the College, which had helped the Stuart line by a thousand services; and it raised a storm of indignation. But more wrongs had yet to be borne before the Church and the nation would take up arms against their King.

The reversal
of the King's
policy
towards
Dissenters.

It was now quite clear to James II. that he had alienated the Church, and he awoke to the conviction that his only hope lay in conciliating the Dissenters. If he could but prevent that powerful body from throwing the weight of their influence into the scale against him, the aspect of affairs would be greatly changed. To court the favour of Nonconformists, however, was a complete reversal of his policy, which had been one of intimidation from the beginning. Their support of the Bill of Exclusion had embittered him against them; and he had shewn his animosity by bringing Baxter to trial, as soon as he was seated on his throne.

James II. determined that henceforward their co-operation, or at least their passive acquiescence in

his schemes, should be secured by every possible mark of Royal favour. Presbyterians, Independents, Baptists and Quakers, all were suffering "for conscience' sake." The disabling Acts of the previous reign—the Act of Uniformity, The Conventicle Act, The Five-Mile Act, The Test Act—had robbed many Nonconformists of their means of livelihood, and consigned hundreds to prolonged imprisonment. All these penal enactments the King resolved to make null and void by the stroke of his pen. He issued a Declaration of Indulgence,¹ by virtue of his dispensing power, to suspend all the pains and penalties which had been imposed for enforcing conformity to the Established Religion, and to grant liberty of conscience to all classes of his subjects without any exception.

The King was loaded with gratitude; and, in the first outburst of joy, Nonconformists of every class, including Roman Catholics, besieged the Court with addresses of thankfulness.² In the joy of recovered

The mixed feelings of Dissenters on the issue of the Declaration of Indulgence.

¹ It was issued first for Scotland, and published by the Council without any opposition. The success attending it led him to re-issue it for England on April 4th, but no provision was made for its being publicly read. It was issued again on April 27, 1688, and it was upon this repetition that the great agitation arose.

² The Anabaptists led the way, and the Quakers, Independents, and Presbyterians all followed. Rapin, 758.

freedom they did not stay to scrutinize his motives too narrowly, or test the validity of the decree. But it was not so with all; a few of the more far-seeing and cautious discerned the snare that was concealed under the proffered boon. Defoe discouraged his Nonconformist friends in vigorous terms; "I had rather," he said, "that the Church of England should pull our clothes off by fines and forfeitures, than that the Papists should fall both upon the Church and Dissenters, and pull our skins off by fire and faggot."¹ Baxter, Howe, and Bunyan, though all had suffered, and would thankfully have welcomed the Indulgence at the beginning of the reign, before the suspicions of the country had been aroused, absolutely refused to side with the Court, or sign the address of gratitude for the issue of the Declaration.

They had not long to wait before they saw that their worst fears were realized, and that toleration of the Papacy was the great object which underlay the King's pretended anxiety for freedom in religion.

Almost as soon as James II. succeeded to the throne, he had sent an agent to Rome to tender his submission to the Pope, and consult with him for the expected union of England with the Roman

The King's
overtures to
the Pope.

¹ Wilson's "Life of Defoe," i. 128.

Church. Nothing could have been more unwise than such a precipitate move; and Innocent XI., more prudent than the King, recognized the hopelessness of attempting to convert a nation by the mere exercise of the Imperial will, and advised him to bide his time in patience, till the popular mind had been worked upon by such methods as his fixed determination would readily suggest.

Nearly three years had now elapsed, and he could wait no longer. Castlemaine was sent to Rome, armed with a proposal for the nation's submission. Again the King's advances were coldly received. The supreme Pontiff, however, so far yielded as to despatch a Papal nuncio to represent the Vatican at the English Court; and when he came, at a public reception in the Palace, after he had been consecrated in the Chapel of S. James's to a titular bishopric of some imaginary see,¹ the King fell on his knees before him and craved his blessing. It was a humiliating spectacle for all who clung to the independence of England, and, as the historian says,² "those who saw the strange sight could not but think of that day of shame, when John did homage for his crown between the hands of Pandulph."

A Papal
nuncio
despatched
to London.

¹ Adda was called Bishop of Amasia, a city of Pontus.

² Macaulay, ii. 268.

His reception at Windsor.

Still hoping to secure the active co-operation of the Pope, the King prepared a splendid pageant in honour of his representative. London had been so deeply stirred by the revival of monasticism that he was afraid of riots, if the exhibition he contemplated should take place in the metropolis. The honour which he intended to confer, would not, he thought, suffer if he received the nuncio in State at the Royal Palace of Windsor; and so it was arranged. It was many generations since Windsor, with all its tale of pomp and magnificence, had witnessed such a gorgeous spectacle. The procession to the Castle consisted of nearly forty of the Royal carriages, each drawn by six horses, richly caparisoned.¹ The Car, that was used by the King on the highest State ceremonials, was placed at the disposal of the nuncio; and the scene in S. George's Hall was on a scale of corresponding splendour. The King and Queen were seated upon the throne, surrounded by courtiers. The foremost of the nobility was selected to present the visitor to their Majesties. "The proud Duke" of Somerset had been destined by the King for the distinguished office, and it must ever

¹ It is not without interest that we are told that two of the Bishops, Crewe and Cartwright, sent their carriages to join in the procession. The whole ceremony was described in the *London Gazette* for July 7, 1687.

be remembered that he declined the proffered honour, and administered a well-merited rebuke to his Royal master by the terms of his refusal. "I am advised," he said, "that I cannot obey your Majesty without breaking the law." "Do you not know," replied the King in anger, "that I am above the law?" To which the Duke retorted with no little irony, "Your Majesty may be, but I am not." That he forfeited his post in the Royal service goes without saying; but his spirited conduct raised him high in the estimation of the people.

This outrage upon the national religion was perpetrated on July 3, 1687, and on July 4, "as if to mark that England was entering upon a new era of government, a proclamation was issued for the dissolution of Parliament."

VI.

The Resistance of the Seven Bishops, and their Imprisonment in the Tower.

CHAPTER VI.

The Resistance of the Seven Bishops, and their Imprisonment in the Tower.

THE spring of 1688 brought on the crisis.

The Declaration of the previous year had been accepted by the country at large. Public loyalty, though it had received many rude shocks, was still predominant both in Church and State; but the King was preparing a measure which was destined to shake the stability of his throne to its very centre.

The re-issue
of the
Declaration
of Indul-
gence.

All that he could have wished had been attained; the liberty he had granted was freely exercised; Dissenting chapels were rising in every town and village; the Roman Mass was openly celebrated, and Parliament showed no signs of active interference. But his imperious temper and a blind infatuation drove him headlong to his doom. It was not enough for him that the Church had stood by in passive compliance; he would require of her distinct co-operation. The Declaration of Indulgence

was reissued. The following extracts will fully explain its purport:—

“ We of our certain knowledge and long experience, knowing that the Catholics, as it is their principle to be good Christians, so it is to be dutiful subjects, do therefore, with the consent of our Privy Council, by our Sovereign Authority, Prerogative Royal, and Absolute Power, suspend, stop and disable all laws or Acts of Parliament, made or executed against any of our Roman Catholic subjects.”

“ It will not be in vain that we have resolved to use our uttermost endeavours to establish liberty of conscience on such just and equal foundations, as will render it unalterable, and secure to all people the free exercise of their Religion for ever. It is such a security we desire, without the burthen and constraint of Oaths and Tests, which have been unhappily made by some Governments, but could never support any: nor should men be advanced by such means to offices and employments, which ought to be the reward of services, fidelity, and merit. In pursuance of this great work, we have been forced to make many changes, both of civil and military officers throughout our dominions.”

It was accompanied by an Order in Council

to the Bishops, to see that it was read by the Clergy in their respective churches at the usual time of Divine Service, either on the 20th or the 27th of May in London, and on the 3rd of June in the provinces. The gauntlet was thrown down, and the Church of the nation took it up. Sancroft, the Primate, rose to the emergency. All the timidity and apathy of his nature, which had held him back from interference hitherto, yielded to boldness and activity. A summons was hastily issued to the Prelates and leading Churchmen to assemble at Lambeth for consultation.¹

A Petition was drawn up, couched in most carefully studied terms, disclaiming all thought either of disloyalty to the Throne or of intolerance of Dissent, but stating expressly that prudence, honour, and conscience all alike forbad their obedience to the order, and praying to be released from the imposed obligation. It was signed by Archbishop Sancroft, and six Bishops—Lloyd of S. Asaph, Turner of Ely, Lake of Chichester, Ken of Bath

¹ An important meeting of fifteen of the chief of the London Clergy had been held before the assembling of this Episcopal Council, including Tillotson, Patrick, Sherlock, and Stillingfleet. At first there was hesitation about resistance, but finally a petition was drawn up and sent round London for signatures. It was subscribed by eighty-five of the beneficed Clergy.

and Wells, White of Peterborough, and Trelawney of Bristol.¹

The Bishops
present their
Petition to
the King.

Time was pressing, as it was already May 18. The Bishops determined therefore to present their Petition the same evening. The Primate was in disgrace, and forbidden to appear at Court; he was, moreover, in too feeble health to risk excitement: the six Suffragans accordingly resolved to go in person before the Sovereign, and place their remonstrance in his hands. The King had been misled,² and, supposing that their mission was a favourable one, gave orders to admit them notwithstanding the lateness of the hour; but when he read the paper his anger was kindled, and he replied, "These are strange words; I did not expect them from you: it is a standard of rebellion."

The charge of rebellion was indignantly repudiated: "Trelawney a rebel!" cried the Bishop of Bristol; "let the records of my house and name be surety against that!" "I will die at your Majesty's

¹ Cf. Appendix, for the full text.

² Cartwright had acted as a spy, and forced himself into the meeting of Bishops. Whilst he was there, they refrained from expressing their real sentiments from suspicions of his honesty, but as soon as he left to report to his master what had taken place, they spoke freely, and the discussion soon led to the framing of the Petition.

feet!" said the Bishop of Ely. Then pleaded the saintly Ken, "Grant us at least the liberty of conscience you profess to offer to all your subjects." But the King was immovable, and, stamping his foot, he said, "My Declaration shall be read." And so, with a dignity and composure becoming their office, the Prelates withdrew, their last words recalling the arraignment of the Apostles before the Jewish Sanhedrim, and asserting that there was One whom they feared more than man, and that they were content that "God's will be done."

The King retired to his closet to reflect upon what had happened, when, a few hours later, all London was excited by the publication of the Petition. Bawling newsvenders hawked it about the streets, and people rose from their beds to hear the startling news. How it fell into the publisher's hands is an unsolved mystery. The Bishops denied any connection with it. The most probable theory is that Sunderland, who was secretly in the service of William of Orange, though a minister at the King's Court, copied the document when it was first put into his hands, on the arrival of the Bishops at the Palace, to present it to His Majesty. Sunderland certainly was most anxious to widen the breach

The publication of the Petition.

between the King and the Church, and to precipitate a revolution.

The King was enraged to the highest point, and refused to regard the transaction otherwise than as a deliberate breach of confidence.

The conduct of the Bishops was universally praised. The news of their resistance spread like wildfire over every part of London, and from London to the provinces; and when Sunday came, there was scarcely a clergyman bold enough in the face of the popular clamour to read the Declaration. In four London churches, at the outside, was the order obeyed, and in each case with unmistakable signs of displeasure.

The Clergy
resist the
order to
read the
Declaration.

The Dean of Westminster, Bishop Sprat, a notorious time-server, made a bid for Royal favour by reading it in the Abbey;¹ but the disturbance that it created was such that it was quite inaudible, and long before he had finished there was no one left but the choristers and the unfortunate scholars on the foundation. No doubt they, too, caught something of the national enthusiasm, as schoolboys generally do, and would gladly have followed the crowd; but a Dean was a dangerous man to exasperate, and they wisely elected to stay in their places, rather

¹ Evelyn's "Diary."

than risk the unpleasant consequences of being flogged for their patriotism. One or two of the Clergy, too timid to disobey, told their congregation that though they had been ordered to read it, no order had been given that the people must hear it; they were at perfect liberty, therefore, to withdraw before the ceremony began.¹

That fateful Sunday was followed by a week of intense anxiety. The more prudent of the King's Councillors strongly insisted on the danger of trifling with such wide-spread disapprobation, and advised a timely concession; but a few of the most reckless courtiers, headed by the intemperate Jeffreys, pressed for a prosecution, and the King followed the counsel that most commended itself to his own imperious temper. The Prelates were summoned to appear before him in Council; and, on June 8, the Primate with the six Suffragans who had signed the Petition, presented themselves at Whitehall. It was decided that they should be proceeded against for the issue of a false, malicious, and seditious libel against the King; and they were asked to enter into recognisances. To the discomfiture of the Council they pleaded the privilege of their peerage and refused. A warrant was issued for their committal

The prosecution of the Bishops determined upon.

Their committal to the Tower.

¹ Note to Burnet, iii. 218, from Lord Dartmouth's account.

to the Tower. "The people of London had often seen the State-barge leave the stairs of Palace Yard with some unhappy Peer proceeding from Westminster Hall to his last prison. Often had they wept, as the axe was borne before some popular favourite;" but the spectacle of the 8th of June has had no parallel in the annals of history. It has often been painted, and in vivid colours, but no adequate description can ever be given of a scene that was absolutely unique.¹

Their
popularity.

No sooner did the Bishops issue from Whitehall, than they were received by the vast crowds, who were awaiting the issue, with the loudest demonstrations of sympathy. No one was more popular in that neighbourhood than the aged Primate; his charity to the poor was unbounded, and the doors of his Palace at Lambeth stood open to every one in need and distress. As the barge pushed off from the steps, men and women rushed into the water, and the people ran along the banks cheering with the wildest enthusiasm, and crying, "God bless the Bishops." When they reached the Traitor's Gate, and passed into the Tower, the soldiers on guard, officers as well as men, fell on their knees and

¹ Salmon's "Crit. Rev.," 582-612. Reresby, 262, 263. Kennet, 512.

begged for a blessing. It was evening when they arrived, and they asked for permission to attend the service in the chapel; and the Lesson for the day, by a happy coincidence, was one well calculated to inspire them with courage:—"In all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God, in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, in stripes, in imprisonments . . . I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted time; now is the day of salvation."¹

The enthusiasm was continued long after the ponderous gates of the Tower had closed upon them. The soldiers of the garrison drank to the health of the Bishops at their mess, and nothing could stop them from such a manifestation of their sympathy.

For the whole time that the confinement lasted, the place of imprisonment was besieged with visitors. It resembled a *levée* at S. James's more nearly than anything else; for numbers of Peers and men in the highest position flocked to pay their respects and offer sympathy. The King's indignation was aroused; but it reached its height when the news was brought to him that ten Nonconformist ministers—the leaders of the very class which he professed

¹ 2 Cor. vi. 2-4.

to have aimed at conciliating—had gone with the multitude to do honour to the prisoners.

The Bishops were ordered to appear before the Court of the King's Bench on June 15; and when the barge brought them back from the Tower, the former scene was repeated almost to the letter, and from the landing-steps to the Court hall they passed through lanes of kneeling men and women, craving their benediction, and even kissing their clothes.

The preliminaries were gone through, the charge was made out, and after the Bishops had pleaded for time to prepare their defence, the trial was fixed for June 29. This time they raised no demurrer, but were set at large upon their own surety to come up when called upon.

During the fortnight that intervened the excitement spread from the metropolis to the farthest part of the country. The sentiments of the nation were well expressed by the popular Cornish ballad, which attributed to the miners of the most obscure part of England their resolve to avenge their countrymen's death, if the King should gain the day:—

“And shall Trelawney die!
There's twenty thousand underground
Will know the reason why.”¹

¹ There is another reading, “Thirty thousand Cornish boys.”

The day of trial arrived. Westminster Hall was crowded from end to end. The liberties of the Church and nation alike were at stake, for the prisoners were Peers as well as Bishops. The Chief Justice, Sir Robert Wright, was the presiding judge, supported by Allibone, Holloway, and Powell. The King was represented by the Attorney¹ and Solicitor² Generals, the Recorder of London, and others; the prisoners by Sawyer, Finch, Treby, Levinz, Pollexfen, and Somers—the last, young and untried, but destined to leave a mark on legal history by his brief but memorable defence that day. Not a few of the jurymen were challenged, for the King had secured that a large number of his dependents should be summoned; but one was accidentally overlooked and sworn, who became a source of no little anxiety, for he was the King's brewer, and was known to derive much profit from the Royal custom. It is said that he strove hard himself to be released, and complained bitterly that, whichever way he should vote, ruin stared him in the

The scene at the trial.

Macaulay says that Mr. Hawker, the Cornish poet, told him that the "Then twenty thousand underground will, etc.," was the echo or response of the miners. "Hist." ii. 367. *Quarterly Review*, vol. cii., p. 313.

¹ Sir Thomas Powis and Sir William Williams.

² Sir Bartholomew Shower.

face. "If I say 'Not guilty,' I shall brew no more ale for the King; and if I say 'Guilty,' I shall brew no more for anybody else." It gives us a good idea of the danger there was that justice might miscarry.

Every point was vigorously contested. Once an acquittal on a technical illegality¹ seemed inevitable, but the sudden interposition of the Lord President as a witness averted what would have been a grievous misfortune.

The unknown advocate, Somers, was the last to speak in the defence; but in a few minutes he tore to shreds the articles of impeachment, and proved that the Petition could not possibly be either false, or malicious, or seditious.

When the judges summed up separately, Wright and Allibone were against the prisoners, Holloway and Powell in their favour. Night had closed in when the jury retired to consider their verdict. The evidence was so convincing that they ought easily to have settled upon it; but the sun was up long before the King's brewer could be persuaded to put conscience before self-interest, and agree to the decision of the rest.

¹ On the impossibility of proving where "the libel" was published. It was avoided by the arrival of Sunderland who received the Petition on the night of its presentation.

The Court reassembled at 10 a.m. and, amidst ^{Their} breathless stillness, the foreman¹ declared that they ^{acquittal.} had found the prisoners "not guilty." Almost before the words were uttered Lord Halifax sprang upon his seat and waved his hat, and in an instant the Hall was reverberating with the cheers from every part. The shout was caught up by the waiting throng in Palace Yard, and carried, like a roll of thunder, to the remotest street in London. The released Bishops, hearing the bells of a neighbouring church, escaped from the crowd to join in the service, and, by a second coincidence, more striking even than the first, the Lesson that they heard was the story of S. Peter's miraculous deliverance from prison!²

Bonfires were lit in the public squares; figures of the Pope, with his Pontifical robes and triple tiara, were paraded through the streets, and then burnt, amidst the jeers of the populace; the windows of private houses were illuminated; and, as a mark of the unmistakable intention to honour the seven Bishops, the commonest form of illumination that they adopted was that of "the seven-branched candlestick."

¹ Sir Roger Langley.

² Acts of the Apostles, ch. xii.

The popular rejoicings at the result of the trial.

The rejoicings spread from the city to the country, and were taken up with the wildest enthusiasm at Hounslow, where the troops were encamped. The King was feasting in Lord Feversham's tent when the intelligence arrived. He despatched a messenger to inquire the cause of such an uproar; and the answer came that it was nothing—only the joy of the soldiers that the Bishops had been acquitted. His countenance fell, and he exclaimed with emotion, "Do you call that nothing?" It was the only thing needed to fill up the measure of his despair: the popular enthusiasm at their imprisonment in the Tower had convinced him that the Church had reached the very height of popularity, despite all his efforts to dislodge it from the affections of the people; the Nonconformists had thrown their influence into the scale against him; the Houses of Parliament had thwarted him whenever he had called them together; and, now, his last hope was fled, for he knew that, if the Army forsook him, all was over. He had played for a tremendous stake, and the game was lost; and he saw, not far distant, the forfeiture of his crown.

APPENDIX.

THE PETITION OF THE SEVEN BISHOPS.

“We find in ourselves great averseness to the distributing and publishing in all our churches your Majesty’s late declaration for Liberty of Conscience, which proceeds neither from any want of duty or obedience to your Majesty (our holy mother the Church of England being both in her principles and constant practice unquestionably loyal, and having, to her great honour, been more than once publicly acknowledged to be so by your gracious Majesty), nor yet from any want of tenderness to Dissenters, in relation to whom we are willing to come to such a temper as shall be thought fit, when the matter shall be considered and settled in Parliament and Convocation. But among many other considerations from this especially, because that Declaration is founded on such a dispensing power as hath been often declared illegal in Parliament, and particularly in the years 1662 and 1672, and in the beginning of your Majesty’s reign; and is a matter of so great moment and consequence to the whole nation, both in Church and State, that your petitioners cannot in prudence, honour, or conscience, so far make themselves parties to it, as the distribution of it all over the nation and the solemn publication of it once and again, even in God’s House, must amount to in common and reasonable construction.”

VII.

The Prince of Orange invited to assume the Reins
of Government.

CHAPTER VII.

The Prince of Orange invited to assume the Reins of Government.

"A YOUNG prince born which will cause disputes." The birth of
a Prince of
Wales.
Such is Evelyn's entry in his Diary for June 10,
1688.

The birth of James the Second's son, the Pretender of after history, from a Roman Catholic mother, discredited at the time as an imposition on the nation, but long since accepted without question,¹ followed immediately upon the imprisonment of the Bishops, and in conjunction with it helped very materially to precipitate the Revolution.

William of Orange, nephew of the King and husband of the heir presumptive to the English

¹ So much were men's minds disturbed upon this point, that the acceptance or denial of his legitimacy became a distinctive mark of Romanist or Protestant.

A most singular blindness seems to have fallen upon the King, for he carefully excluded from the Palace, at the time of the birth, all in whose testimony the nation was likely to place confidence. It was long before the Prince came to be acknowledged as legitimate. Cf. Johnson's *Idler*, No. 10.

Influences
brought to
bear upon
William of
Orange.

throne, had long been watching with the keenest interest the growing antagonism between the Sovereign and the people; and there can be little doubt that he eagerly embraced the opportunity of the wide-spread suspicion about the legitimacy of the Prince to further his ambitious designs. It is almost certain that he never himself shared the belief that it was a supposititious child, for prayers were offered in his chapel for the Prince of Wales up till the very eve of his departure from Holland, but he saw that, in the present temper of the country, it might easily be used to inflame the popular mind in his favour.

For some years past he had gathered round him in his exile an ever-increasing number of important refugees,¹ discontented noblemen and others, whom intolerance and persecution and dread of Papal influences had driven out of England; and they were constantly pressing their conviction upon him, that this was a wicked attempt to set aside his wife's right of succession; and that the present time, when the quarrel between the King and the Church had

¹ The chief persons who held negotiations with him, besides those mentioned above, were Sir Robert Peyton, Dr. Burnet, Lords Wharton, Dunblain, Mordaunt, Delamere, Halifax, and Pawlet. Kennet, 518. Eachard, iii. 877.

just culminated in the trial at Westminster Hall, was most favourable for active interference.

There was also an influential party in England who were working for the same end. A number of Whig Lords had been holding a series of secret consultations at Lady Place on the banks of the Thames,¹ and in the town house of the Earl of Shrewsbury, which resulted in the despatch of a formal invitation to William, signed in cypher, and intrusted to the chief of the conspiracy. It asked him to make an armed descent upon the English shores to free the nation from a despotic absolutism and the threatening danger of Papal tyranny. The names of the conspirators deserve to be remembered, if only for the exceeding daring of the act. Had the expedition failed, and the cypher been read by the King, their heads would have been laid upon the block, and they would have come down to posterity as traitors to their country. They were the Earls of Devonshire, Danby, and Shrewsbury; Lord Lumley; Compton, Bishop of London; Admiral Russell, and Sidney.

An invitation sent to him from England.

¹ At Hurley between Maidenhead and Henley. It was the seat of Lord Lovelace. Among the ruins of it an inscription was discovered stating that it was once a Monastery, founded at the Norman Revolution, and that it was "in this place, 600 years afterwards, that the Revolution of 1688 was begun."

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He accepts
the invita-
tion and
issues a
Manifesto.

The Prince of Orange accepted the invitation, and with that calm deliberation which was his chief characteristic, began at once to prepare for the expedition. When his plans were fully matured, he drew up a manifesto of his intentions and object, and despatched messengers with instructions to distribute it broadcast among the English people. No less than eighty thousand copies of it were published! It was dated from the Hague, October 12, 1688. It set forth the violation of law and liberty to which England had been subjected, and the various acts which had tended to undermine the Established Religion, as well as the belief that the rightful heir to the throne was being set aside by a wicked imposture.¹

In the face of these national calamities, he had no hesitation in accepting the invitation lately received from certain lords both temporal and spiritual, to constitute himself the defender of the Protestant Faith, to investigate the legitimacy of the Prince's

¹ It concluded with the words: "We, for our part, will concur in everything that may procure the peace and happiness of the nation, which a free and lawful Parliament shall determine, since we have nothing before our eyes, in this our undertaking, but the preservation of the Protestant religion, the covering of all men from persecution for their conscience, the securing to the whole nation the free enjoyment of their laws, liberties, and rights under a just and legal government."

birth, to protect men from suffering persecution for conscience' sake, and to strive to secure to the whole nation the free enjoyment of their laws, rights, and liberties under a just government. The whole gist of the manifesto was gathered into a single sentence and emblazoned on the flag which floated over the ship that carried his fortunes: "The Protestant Religion and the Liberties of England," and it was supported by the appropriate motto of the house of Nassau, to which he belonged: "I will maintain."¹

It is necessary here to vindicate the action of the Bishops of the Church at this critical juncture, for it would appear from the terms of the Declaration to be quite inconsistent with their after conduct in refusing the oath of allegiance to William and Mary. There can be no question that the Prince in his eagerness to pose as the chosen representative of the Church and people of England, to uphold their rights, exaggerated the weight of the signatures to the invitation. One Bishop alone signed the request, and the name of one and one only did not justify him in his boast that he came at the request of certain Spiritual Lords.² When the Bishops were summoned

The action of the Bishops in regard to the invitation.

¹ "Je maintiendrai."

² The exact words of the manifesto were: "most earnestly solicited by a great many lords, both spiritual and temporal."

before King James and asked for an explanation, they were unanimous in denying the imputation cast upon them; and, save in the case of the Bishop of London, no one has ever doubted their veracity. Bishop Compton's answer, it is true, was couched in language of studied ambiguity, for he tried to divert suspicion from himself by the evasive confession, "I am confident that the rest of the Bishops will as readily answer to the negative as myself."¹

The alarm of
King James,
and his
promises of
repentance.

As soon as intelligence reached England that the Prince of Orange had actually embarked upon his expedition, the King was filled with dismay. He saw that his only chance lay in securing the support of the Church which he had so recklessly alienated. Summoning the Bishops to counsel him in his extremity, he expressed his desire to repair his past mistakes and retrace his steps; and his episcopal advisers rose to the emergency. With no sign of timidity or trace of concession, they called upon him boldly to undo his illegal acts, to dissolve the Ecclesiastical Commission, to restore the President

¹ According to another version his words were: "I am confident that there is not one of my brethren who is not as guiltless as myself in the matter." Attempts have been made to justify the equivocation; it was very clever, no doubt, but by all right-minded judges of morality it will be condemned.

and Fellows of Magdalene College, to depose all Roman Catholics from their offices, to summon a free Parliament, and, finally, to submit to their arguments and be readmitted into the bosom of the Anglican Church.¹

Such was his realization of the desperate condition of his prospects, that he not only promised compliance, but even proceeded to carry out at least a part of their suggestions.² Two things he asked of them in return for his submission: one that they would prepare a prayer to God for deliverance from the perils of invasion; the other that they would agree to a declaration of abhorrence of the Prince's action. The first they assented to, but the form they drew up was so ambiguously worded (we hesitate to say designedly) that it was capable of being used "by those who wished for the Prince's coming as well by those who desired the contrary." The second request they deliberately refused.

The news of the sailing of the expedition,³ which

¹ They were written down in ten Articles, and formally presented, on October 3. Eachard, iii. 892.

² The expelled Fellows were reinstated at Magdalene College. The Bishop of London was restored to his see. The Ecclesiastical Commission was dissolved. The old Charters of London were given back. All this was done before October 15.

³ It put to sea on September 28. The fleet consisted of 60

had spread such dismay at Court, was quickly followed by a report that the invading fleet had been overtaken by a violent storm, and driven back in the utmost confusion. It revived the King's courage; and, repenting of the hasty concessions made under the influence of panic, he countermanded the orders which he had given. But the revival of his hopes was of the briefest duration.

After refitting his vessels the Prince set sail again, and landed in Torbay on November 5. It was a day of auspicious omen for one who had made himself the champion of the Protestant cause.

The Prince's arrival, and his disappointment at his reception.

The Prince's hopes had been raised by the assurances of the discontented refugees at his Court, and he fully expected that the whole country would rise to welcome him. But he was bitterly disappointed. The nobles and landlords, and even the people, of whom he had been told that nineteen twentieths were on his side, all held back, and it required the utmost persuasion of his English courtiers to prevent him from falling into utter despondency. Nine days elapsed before any one of importance joined his standard.¹ The memory

men of war, and 700 transports. The troops were 11,000 infantry, and 4,500 cavalry.

¹ Lord Cornbury, son of the Earl of Clarendon, deserted from the King's army with some officers and one hundred privates, and

of the Bloody Assize, and the terrible vengeance exacted from the supporters of Monmouth in the late Rebellion were too fresh in the recollection of the inhabitants of the West of England to let them engage on his side till they had some guarantee that his success was assured. At Exeter a show of resistance was made by closing the gates; and after he had forced an entrance, the Corporation and citizens were obstinate in their determination to remain as passive spectators. William thought at least that the Church would be with him, but what was his dismay to find on entering the Cathedral that there was not a single dignitary to salute him, or to join in the service of thanksgiving which he proposed to offer up. The Bishop and Dean had fled on the first news of his approach, and the Canons refused to enter their stalls or in any way countenance his presence. The Bishop¹ had long been a mere tool in the King's hands, and was one of the few who had read the Declaration of Indulgence, and he was anxiously hoping now that he might be rewarded by the Northern Primacy went over to the Prince. His example was followed by other regiments. Lord Churchill, and the Dukes of Grafton and Ormond, joined him shortly after. Kennet, 527.

The opposition of the Church.

¹ Dr. Lamplugh. He aspired to the post which the King had been keeping for De Petre, a Roman Catholic.

which the King had kept vacant for his Confessor, but which he would hardly be bold enough to fill up with a Papist under existing circumstances. The Dean and Canons had no expectations of this kind, but naturally enough hesitated to be the first to welcome the Invader.¹

It was the first beginning of the opposition of the Church, which so constantly, and we think so providentially, hampered him in much of his future conduct. The fact is, he was led throughout to expect more than the Church was prepared to give him. The Monarchy and the Church had long gone hand in hand; the severance of the union had, it is true, been seriously threatened through the action of the King in the late trial of the Bishops, but there was still a very large section of Churchmen who anticipated greater evils than any they had yet experienced, if William should be suffered to dethrone his uncle. They were ready to hail with contentment, many even with satisfaction, the establishment of a Regency to meet the pressing needs of the time, but the permanent exclusion of the hereditary Sovereign was a contingency, they felt, which ought to be resisted to the utmost; and it was not long before they realized, notwithstanding

¹ Eachard, iii. 911.

the tone of his manifesto, that nothing less than the throne was the Prince's aim.

It was thus that the Church and the nation became divided: and the Tories and the Whigs ranged themselves in bitterly hostile camps. The Tories, to which the great bulk of loyal Churchmen then belonged, believed implicitly in the indefeasible right of kings. The King's power, they affirmed, was held *jure Divino*, and the King's "character" was indelible.

The Tories and Whigs are brought into active hostility.

The Whigs, on the other hand, held that the right of sovereignty was originally lodged in the community, and that it was only by mutual contract that its exercise was delegated to an individual.

The parties were brought into active opposition by the flight of the King. It had not been forced upon him through any fear for his personal safety, for no threats of violence had anywhere been made. It was a deliberate abandonment of duty under most aggravated conditions, for he left the country absolutely without provision for carrying on the government; and all the evils of anarchy were at once let loose. The violence of the mob broke out in every part of the metropolis. The Papists became the first victims of assault; their houses were plundered,

The King's flight.

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The House
of Lords
interpose to
maintain a
Government.

their chapels burnt, and a general massacre of all who professed the Roman Faith was threatened. There was no Parliament to take the initiative in restoring order. The only body that had even a semblance of authority was the House of Peers. They were hereditary legislators, and they determined upon immediate action, but only to be frustrated at the outset; for as soon as they proposed to reinstate the chief ministers in their offices, they found that there was no seal to affix to their letters of appointment. The King in his flight had flung it into the Thames; he had even burnt the writs which were ready to be issued for the election of a Parliament. It was a deliberate act of *malice prepense* to place his country in inextricable straits, and the recognition of such unpardonable recklessness alienated not a few who would otherwise have remained loyal to his cause.

A House of
Convention
summoned.

The Upper House was roused to a realization of the crisis by the activity of the Spiritual Peers. Anything, they felt, would be better than the spread of anarchy, so they took upon themselves the responsibility of inviting William to summon a Convention. Their thoughts went back to 1660. Then, for the first, the only time in the annals of English history, such an assembly had been

recognized.¹ It was a Parliament to all intents and purposes, but it relieved the Peers of their embarrassment from the absence of authority to issue the writs, for it might be summoned informally. They had no doubt that if the first Convention had assumed authority to invite Charles II. to take possession of the throne, the second might well claim to give provisional powers to public officers to act at least till Parliament should be constitutionally assembled.

The House of Convention met on January 22, 1689. At their earliest sitting they passed their memorable vote which led to so much after-trouble, and threw the two parties into such violent antagonism.² By far the majority of the Convention were Whigs, and holding the views they did upon the source of government, they had no scruples in deciding that the throne was vacated by the action of the King, who had broken the contract between

Their decision that the throne was vacant.

¹ The term was used in Scotland, where a distinction was drawn between a Convention of the States and a Parliament. In 1660 Charles II. was in difficulties; he could not recognize the body then sitting as a Parliament, but, on the other hand, he felt that it was their resolution which had restored him. He therefore escaped from the difficulty by giving it this title. Rapin, 784.

² They deferred their debate till January 28, to give members time to assemble.

Sovereign and people by voluntarily withdrawing from the Kingdom. This was their resolution :—

“That King James the Second, having endeavoured to subvert the Constitution of the Kingdom, by breaking the original contract between King and people ; and by the advice of Jesuits and other wicked persons having violated the fundamental laws and withdrawn himself out of the Kingdom, hath *abdicated* the Government, and that the throne is thereby vacant.” The next day, they voted further, “That it hath been found by experience to be inconsistent with this Protestant Kingdom, to be governed by a Popish Prince.”

Their
decision
challenged
in the House
of Lords.

A week elapsed before their decision was submitted for the approval of the Upper House. A large body of the Peers Temporal and Spiritual were Tories, and it became clear at once that the decision of the Lower House would be challenged. The Peers preferred, however, not to meet the vote with a direct rejection, but reserving the consideration of it, to proceed upon an hypothesis, “if the throne should eventually be found to be vacant, should it be filled by a Regent or by a King ?”¹

¹ The chief who supported the Regency were the Dukes of Somerset and Beaufort, Lords Clarendon, Rochester, and Nottingham. Against it the leading speakers were Lords Halifax and Danby. Kennet, 544.

When the question was put to the House fifty-one voted for a King, forty-nine for a Regency. We experience no surprise, when we recall their characteristic dogmas of passive obedience, at hearing that almost the whole of the Episcopal Bench voted in the minority.¹ Compton and Trelawney alone went over to the Whigs; Sancroft and two or three others were absent, or the Regency would have been assured, and possibly much of the subsequent trouble avoided.

The Peers, however, the following day stultified in a measure the vote which they had given. On the principle that "the king never dies," it was shewn that the right of succession passes immediately without any interregnum to his heir. This decision involved a further question. Supposing that King James had abdicated—for abdication in its effects is equivalent to death—to whom had the throne passed? to the Prince of Orange? or to the infant Prince of Wales? This question was put to the vote. The House decided against the claims of the former by a small majority; against those of the latter by a very large one. Apart from their suspicions that the infant was illegitimate, it was argued that his

Further
debate in
the Upper
House.

¹ "The Bishops were all for a Regency." Evelyn's "Diary,"
January 15, 1689.

removal into France had left the country with no guarantee of his identity.

A conference
between the
two Houses.

The conflict of opinion between the two Houses became so determined (neither showing any disposition to yield in the smallest degree) that the government seemed on the point of being brought to a deadlock. A conference was proposed, as the only possible hope of extrication from the difficulty; and that which was held at this crisis, alike for the energy of its discussions and for its pregnant consequences, was perhaps the most remarkable to be met with in the annals of Parliament.¹

The chief speakers for the Commons were Hampden, Pollexfen, and Somers; the last two had been the advocates of the Seven Bishops at Westminster Hall, but were now ranged against them.

For the Lords, the Earls of Clarendon and Nottingham represented the Temporal section, the Bishop of Ely the spiritual. The Primate pleaded the infirmities of age as an excuse, and stood aloof from the councils of the nation in this critical time.

The debate turned upon the meaning of the term "abdication," and its applicability to existing circumstances. The Commons argued that it might

¹ A full report of the discussions may be found in Rapin, 785 *et seq.*

fitly be defined as "a throwing off, a disowning and renunciation of an office," and that this could be effected equally by such acts as were inconsistent with the retention of the office, as by express words under a formal writ of resignation. It was not, therefore, the equivalent of "desertion," which did not necessarily involve more than a temporary quitting or neglect of office, such as left the delinquent at liberty to return to it again. This was their answer to the proposed amendment of the Lords to substitute "deserted" for "abdicated." To accept such a definition of the King's action would lay them open to his restoration, and this they argued was a contradiction to the Lords' assurance that "they were willing to secure the country against his return;" and it was calculated also to aggravate the confusion, as being distinctly opposed to the will of the nation.

The Bishop of Ely, as the mouthpiece of the Peers, adopted a somewhat subtle line of argument, and drew a distinction between a right and the exercise of a right. The latter, he said, might be taken away without the violation of any constitutional principle, the right itself remaining simply in abeyance. But the Commons were in no mood for conciliatory explanations, and, losing patience, one of their number, Sir Robert Howard, rose to his feet, and in a powerful

speech swept away all subtleties and refining distinctions by an appeal to the great fundamental rule, "Salus populi est suprema lex." The frank recognition of that principle in the existing crisis offered the only possibility of escape amid such a conflict of opinion, and not a few of the Lords were impressed by his words. The Conference, however, was unable to draw up any formal concordat, but it was quite clearly seen from that time forward, that whatever the abstract principles of abdication and forfeiture of rights, or the conditions under which a vacancy of the throne might ordinarily be declared, they had to deal then with a practical fact, necessitating an immediate decision unless the country was to be given up to confusion and ruin.

The Prince of Orange expresses his own decision.

The Prince of Orange seized the opportunity and cut the knot. He had remained silent hitherto, desiring, as he said, to carry out the will of the nation, but as there was so little chance of obtaining a clear expression of this amidst such divided counsel, he felt constrained to contribute to the solution of the difficulty by the declaration of his own mind; and he made it in language of unmistakable firmness and decision. If, he said, the country resolved upon a Regency, they must seek a Regent in some other person than himself. If,

again, they agreed that, setting aside the legitimacy of the Prince of Wales, they would devolve the kingdom upon the Princess Mary, and set her singly upon the throne, he should return gladly to his own land, and leave her in undisturbed possession of the honour and responsibility. No one deserved a throne better than his wife, and he should rejoice to see her in the occupation of that of England; but, using an argument which had more force at the end of the seventeenth century than it would probably have at the end of the nineteenth, he declared that he could not be both her husband and her subject. As a married man it was impossible for him to be anything but head of his own family.

It was a speech that must have perplexed those who had convinced themselves, or had concluded from the terms of his manifesto, that his motives were wholly disinterested. He had openly proclaimed that the maintenance of the Protestant Faith was the main object of his invasion, and he had declared his intention of probing to the bottom the claims of the Prince of Wales to be a legitimate son; but now, when he discovered that that which lay closest to his heart all the time was in danger of miscarrying, he confessed that he was ready to

The exposure of his real aim.

leave the nation practically at the mercy of the King, who would return with a more autocratic despotism! And what became of his second boast? Why, when once his ambitious project had succeeded, and he found himself seated on the throne, not another syllable was ever heard about the inquiry into the reality of the young Prince's claims.

Whether those who heard the speech had their eyes opened by it to understand his character better we cannot say, but there can be no question that it succeeded, perhaps even beyond his expectations, for it completely turned the scale in the House of Lords. They made no more scruple of accepting the vote of the Commons, "that the King had abdicated, and that the throne was vacant."

An attempt, it is true, was subsequently made to give the crown to the Princess alone,¹ but again the chief person concerned interposed to solve the difficulty. "She was," she said, taking up the thread of his own declaration, "the Prince's wife, and could never be other than what she would be in conjunction with and under him."

The Corona- It left only one course open—the Coronation of

¹ Lord Danby sent a messenger to her in Holland with the proposal.

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William and Mary as joint occupants of the throne —and it was at once resolved upon.¹

tion of
William and
Mary.

¹ That the Prince and Princess should be King and Queen, but that the sole and full regal power should be in the Prince only, in the name of both. It was carried in the Lords by sixty-five to forty-five, according to Eachard; by sixty-two to forty-seven according to Clarendon. Forty Peers, including twelve Bishops, protested. It was a marvellous change, completely altering the lineal succession. Hallam, "Const. Hist.," iii. 98.

VIII.

The Nonjurors' Protest against the Principles of the Revolution, and its Importance in the Preservation of the Historic Church.

CHAPTER VIII.

The Nonjurors' Protest against the Principles of the Revolution, and its Importance in the Preservation of the Historic Church.

THE Coronation of William and Mary took place in Westminster Hall, on April 11, 1689, the crown, in the absence of the Primate, being placed upon their heads by Compton, Bishop of London. In order to secure the stability of the throne the oaths of allegiance were ordered to be administered in both Houses of Parliament.¹ The Primate and several of the Bishops, from conscientious objections to transferring their allegiance during the lifetime of him to whom they had already given it, absented themselves from attendance, knowing that by the existing law they could not be reached, provided only that they were contented to abstain from

¹ When the Convention was changed into a Parliament, the Act for effecting the change provided that, after March 1, no one should sit in either House without taking the oath; it did not order members to come forward and take it whether they intended to occupy their seats or not.

taking their seats. The Commons were indignant that the lawfulness of their course of action should appear to be called in question; and flushed with success in the cause which they had so vigorously espoused, they were in no mood for toleration. Their views of the relationship of the Church to the State were strongly Erastian, and they determined to give a practical expression to them, and subject the Ecclesiastical to the Civil Power. For this end they passed a Bill¹ requiring all persons holding office in the Church to take the oath of allegiance before August 1, under pain of suspension for six months; in case of persistence in refusal, deprivation was to follow after February 1, in the next year. The Lords held out for a more conciliatory course, but were overborne by the force of the popular feeling, and compelled to accept the Bill with its stringent conditions.

The oath of allegiance imposed on Ecclesiastical officers.

Divided opinions as to its legitimacy.

Opinion was nearly evenly divided on the Episcopal Bench, the Archbishop of York and nine Bishops assenting to be sworn;² the Archbishop of Canterbury and eight Bishops refusing.

The former satisfied themselves that they had to

¹ April 24.

² Bishops of London, Lincoln, Bristol, Winchester, Rochester, Llandaff and S. Asaph; subsequently, also the Bishops of Carlisle and S. David's.

deal with an accomplished fact, and that the time had gone by for the consideration of abstract principles. Their position was stated by the Bishop of Carlisle in the following terms:—"whenever a Sovereign *de facto* is universally submitted to, and recognized by all these estates, I must believe that person to be lawful and rightful monarch of this kingdom, who alone has a just title to my allegiance, and to whom only I owe an oath of fealty."

Now, before any one presumes to censure those who felt that under no circumstances could they transfer to another the allegiance they had already promised to King James, he must try to realize the tremendous change that has passed over men's minds, and that nothing can be more unjust than to measure the conduct of men of that generation by the standard of opinion held in our own.

But, whatever estimate men may form of the judgment of the recusants, there can be no doubt that the Commons acted very unwisely in pressing the imposition of the oath. It was most emphatically a time for a conciliatory policy, and they could have adopted it without making any concession of principle; for it had not been the custom of the country hitherto to administer the oath of allegiance

The Non-
juring
Bishops.

to Ecclesiastical officers on the accession of a new sovereign. What the Government enforced, then, was a new law—new in principle, and absolutely certain to provoke resistance. The evils, therefore, that followed, in common justice must be laid to the charge of those who imposed the test, not of those who, from conscientious scruples, felt bound to refuse it. Those of the Episcopal order who refused were Sancroft, Archbishop of Canterbury; Ken, Bishop of Bath and Wells; Turner of Ely, Frampton of Gloucester, Lloyd of Norwich, White of Peterborough, Thomas of Worcester, Lake of Chichester, and Cartwright of Chester. Before the actual day for deprivation arrived, two of these—Lake of Chichester and Thomas of Worcester—passed to their rest, but the part they played had no slight influence in encouraging their brethren, who survived, to remain firm to their purpose. Indeed, their dying moments were spent in testifying to the righteousness of the course upon which they had embarked; and the esteem in which they were held made the testimony they bore to be regarded as a solemn charge and obligation. The Bishop of Chichester, on his death-bed, dictated his profession in these words:—"Being called by a sick and, I think, a dying bed, and the good hand of God upon

Bishop
Lake's
dying
profession.

me in it, to take the last and best viaticum, the Sacrament of my dear LORD'S Body and Blood, I hold myself obliged to make this short recognition and profession. Whereas 'I was baptized into the religion of the Church of England, and sucked it in with my milk, I have constantly adhered to it through the whole course of my life, and now, if so be the will of GOD, shall die in it; and I had resolved, through GOD'S grace assisting me, to have died so, though at the stake. And whereas that religion of the Church of England taught me the doctrine of non-resistance and passive obedience, which I have accordingly inculcated upon others, and which I took to be the distinguishing character of the Church of England, I adhere firmly and steadfastly to it, and, in consequence of it, have incurred a suspension from the exercise of my office, and expected a deprivation. I find in so doing much inward satisfaction, and if the Oath had been tendered at the peril of my life, I could only have obeyed by suffering. I desire you, my worthy friends and brethren, to bear witness of this upon occasion, and to believe in it, as the words of a dying man, who is now engaged in the most sacred and solemn act of conversing with GOD in this world, and may, for aught he knows to the contrary,

appear with these very words in his mouth at the dreadful tribunal.”¹

Bishop
Thomas's
last words.

The Bishop of Worcester ended his life with a similar testimony: “If my heart do not deceive me, and God’s grace do not fail me, I think I could suffer at the stake rather than take this oath.”²

Such deaths as these had no little weight in producing the final decision.

One bold attempt was made by the Government to counteract such influence, and to alienate the sympathies of the people from the suspended Prelates. It was felt that when deprivation had taken effect, and the Nonjuring Bishops had been ejected from their sees, it would be no easy matter to fill their places, so long as a considerable party was disposed to regard them as martyrs for conscience’ sake. The people had not forgotten that the leading Nonjurors were the selfsame men who had stopped the King when he was going boldly forward in the establishment of the Papacy; and that they suffered imprisonment rather than sanction his despotic and unconstitutional conduct. To

¹ He was so conscientious in the matter that he used to say that “the day of death and judgment are as certain as the 1st of August, and the 1st of February.” *Cf.* Defence of his Profession. Pages 7-11.

² *Ibid.*

counteract the popularity which they had earned, a discreditable and unscrupulous plot was contrived by the Government, by which they attempted to prove that a conspiracy had been formed for the assassination of William and the restoration of King James. Lord Preston, Sir John Friend, and Mr. Ashton were tried and condemned for high treason, and in the letters found in their possession were two purporting to have been written by Turner, Bishop of Ely, implicating others of his Episcopal brethren.¹ At the trial, which took place in January, the Crown lawyers used every effort to involve the Bishop, and his sudden flight, when the warrant for his arrest was issued, gave some colour to their pleadings; but, though believed at the time, posterity has acknowledged that the proofs of his guilt are most inconclusive. Lord Preston purchased his life by a base imputation upon his associates; Sir John Friend and Mr. Ashton, who were most likely wholly innocent of the charges laid against them, died upon the scaffold. The

A Govern-
ment plot to
damage the
influence of
the Non-
juror

¹ Certain expressions in them which the writer used: *e.g.* "I speak my elder brother's sentiments as well as my own, and the rest of the family," or, "of my nearest relations,"—were assumed to refer to the Archbishops and Bishops! Turner unfortunately fled, instead of meeting the charge, but it certainly was never proved. Tindal, 166. Lathbury's "Nonjurors," 79.

whole affair reflects discredit upon the Government, but it answered their purpose, if we may accept the testimony of Burnet in the history of his times.¹ "The discovery," he says, "of the Bishop of Ely's correspondence in the name of the rest, gave the King a great advantage in filling these vacant sees."

Difficulty of
filling the
places of the
ejected
Bishops.

It would seem, however, that it was no easy matter, notwithstanding the unfair prejudice that was thus created against the deprived Nonjurors, to fill their places. Tillotson, despite his strong Erastianism, was most unwilling to accept the Primacy in the room of Sancroft, for he foresaw the risk of unpopularity from supplanting one whom a large section of the Church regarded as a Confessor.

In Norwich a petition, very largely signed, was sent to the King, praying "that the rigour of the depriving Act might be mitigated;" and it was proposed that the whole body of the Clergy should offer themselves to become surety for the peaceable administration of the Diocese, if they might be spared from seeing their beloved chief pastor superseded by another. When the petition was refused, and the Bishopric was offered to Sharp, he resolutely declined, asserting that it was quite impossible for him "to build his rise upon the ruin of any one of

¹ The whole is recorded in the "State Trials," published 1691.

the Fathers of the Church, who, for piety, good morals, and strictness of life, had left no equal."

A similar petition to that from Norwich was drawn up for Bath and Wells, but met with no more favourable reception. The greatest difficulty of all was encountered in supplanting the beloved Ken. When Beveridge heard that he was to receive the offer of the see, he went at once to the Primate for counsel. His own wishes were distinctly adverse to the acceptance. It would seem, however, from the language which Sancroft used, that the Primate was under a different impression; for no sooner was the object of the interview made known, than he replied, "Though I should give you my advice, I don't imagine that you will take it." Beveridge, however, assured him that it was honestly sought, and would certainly be followed, and it was given, in terms of such uncompromising firmness that it sealed his inclinations: "When they come to offer you the see, say *nolo*, and say it from the heart. Nothing is really easier than to resolve for yourself what it is right to do."

When Beveridge declined, it was pressed upon Kidder. He, too, was not without scruples, but, unfortunately for him, they were overborne, for his intrusion into the diocese was strongly resented,

Beveridge declines to take Ken's place.

Kidder reluctantly accepts it.

and so deep was the popular feeling that even after the lapse of several years, when the awful tragedy occurred in which he and his wife were buried in the ruins of the palace through the violence of a hurricane, it was regarded by many as a righteous vengeance for taking unlawful possession of another's heritage.¹

It has created some surprise that men should have been actuated by feelings apparently so discrepant in the matter of accepting benefices in 1662 and in 1690: but though at first sight there is a similarity of circumstances, it wholly vanishes on closer inspection. At the Restoration, the Clergy pressed eagerly into the livings from which Nonconforming ministers were ejected, because they knew that they were only recovering rights which had been unjustly usurped during the Commonwealth, and they did it all the more eagerly from the consciousness that, in reclaiming their own, they were re-establishing for the Church her ancient constitution, which had been from the beginning Episcopal and not Presbyterian.²

¹ He often expressed his regret at having accepted the see, and said that he looked on the acceptance as "a great infelicity." Bowles' "Life of Ken," ii. 210-214. The storm was on the night of November 26, 1703.

² Many of the Nonconformists who took the livings of the ejected Incumbents had not been episcopally ordained.

It was the conviction of this that justified to the full the Clergy who, without the slightest hesitancy, availed themselves of the provisions of the Act of Uniformity; and though they must have felt deeply that even the semblance of harsh treatment should be extended to men like Calamy and Owen and Manton—men as exemplary and blameless in their lives, as conscientious in their actions, as the very best of the Nonjuring divines—the principles of the Church were at stake, and it was their duty to preserve them.

In 1690 those who were first invited to occupy the places of the deprived Prelates saw no such condition of affairs to induce them to take office; and we have no right to blame them if they left it to others less sensitive than themselves to administer the dioceses of deprived Bishops.

Now, it is most necessary that we should endeavour to ascertain clearly all the motives which weighed with the Nonjurors, and kept them fixed in their resolution not to acknowledge the sovereignty of William and Mary. Primarily, as we have seen, they were influenced by their strong belief in the Divine right of kings and the necessity of passive obedience to the Lord's anointed; but there were other considerations in the background, which

The real motives which influenced the Nonjurors, and kept them firm to their purpose.

came in to convince them of the wisdom of their action.

These considerations deserve most careful attention, for they have never been adequately accounted of, by most historians not even noticed, in estimating the circumstances of the time. If, as writers generally appear to think, it was merely the theological dogma of the Divine right of kings, and the duty of passive obedience that called forth such uncompromising obstinacy of purpose, we are constrained to inquire upon what principle it was felt to be so imperious in its demands upon the conscience now, seeing that the selfsame men, or five of them at least,¹ had made no scruple of disobedience when the word of the King had commanded them to read the Declaration of Indulgence.

We believe that the true key to their position is the fact that they saw looming in the distance the rising cloud of peril and danger for the Catholic character of the Church, if William were left unchecked to work out his will in regard to it. The Nonjuring Bishop of Ely wrote to the Primate full of anxiety about the pressure that was being brought to bear upon Ken, and expressed his earnest conviction that if, in an evil hour, he should be induced

¹ Sancroft, Ken, Turner, Lake, and Trelawney.

to comply with the new Government, "the true interests of the Church would be sacrificed." In the diocese of Norwich, the Clergy saw the evils that were threatening, and consulted together how they might be averted "for the preservation of the ancient Church."

A careful study of the lives of other Nonjurors will betray again and again the same overpowering sense of insecurity for the maintenance of the Catholic Church, and of the imperative necessity of interposing a barrier against the return of the religion of the Commonwealth.

And we shall have no difficulty in showing that they were no groundless fears.

First there was the patent fact that the Prince in Holland had professed himself a Presbyterian, and he had taken no pains to conceal his dislike to the Church of England. Indeed, it was so marked that it had driven Dr. Hooper, who had been sent over as Chaplain to Princess Mary, to resign his post. He saw with dismay that William was using his conjugal authority to compel her to abstain from his ministrations in her own Chapel, where the English Liturgy was used, and to attend with himself a Presbyterian service, which he said that he greatly preferred. Such conduct augured ill for his

Their fears
from
William's
Presby-
terianism.

influence in England, and the Nonjurors were quite alive to it, for one of their number, Ken, had been appointed in succession to Hooper; and it was only by his extraordinary tact and persuasion that Mary was saved from abandoning altogether the Faith of her baptism, at the bidding of her husband. It was quite true that, after landing in England, he had outwardly conformed to the National Church by receiving the Sacrament according to the rites of the Anglican Church, but the act was accompanied by no abjuration of his former profession, and was rightly regarded as little more than a political act of conciliation.

The
threatened
danger from
proposed
legislation.

The second fact that opened the eyes of true Churchmen to the impending danger was the Bill for Union and Comprehension. It aimed at uniting in one body all Protestant subjects; and William pledged himself to support it to the utmost of his power. It is usual to couple with this the Bill for Toleration for easing of Protestant Dissenters, which was passed at the same time. But it will be seen by their provisions that they were in principle essentially different.¹ The Bill for Tolera-

¹ The Toleration Act was entitled, "An Act for exempting their Majesties' Protestant subjects dissenting from the Church of England from the penalties of certain laws." Some safeguards were pro-

tion was a measure perfectly compatible with the maintenance of the doctrines and discipline of the Church unimpaired, and provoked no opposition from the Ecclesiastical rulers. The Bill for Union, had it been accepted, would have altered its whole constitution; for on the confession of one of the chief spokesmen of Nonconformity, it would have brought in at least two-thirds of the Protestant Dissenters without any regard to the only recognized terms of admission; and yet William was hoping and working to get it passed into law without consulting the Clergy, or advising in any way with the Houses of Convocation.¹

A third measure set on foot by the King calculated

vided, viz. subscription to certain of the Thirty-nine Articles of the Church. How it was welcomed by Dissenters may be gathered from the language of Defoe. He called for "an annual commemoration of that great day of their deliverance, when it pleased God to tread down persecution, oppression, Church-tyranny, and State-tyranny under the law, and to establish the liberty of their consciences." Wilson's "Defoe," i. 181. It was simply a relaxation of the unduly severe enactments of the two former reigns, but they were not repealed. Practically, however, it did its work, for they were treated as though they had been repealed. The House of Commons readily passed the Bill, but the Union Act they strenuously resisted.

¹ "The House of Commons," says Burnet, "were much offended with the Bill of Comprehension, as containing matters relating to the Church in which the representative body of the Clergy had not been so much as advised with."

Proposed
Liturgical
Revision to
meet the
objections of
Dissenters.

to arouse the worst fears of the Church's defenders was the proposal for Liturgical Revision to make the Service-books more acceptable to Nonconformists, and for the production of a general scheme of Reformation adapted to the exigencies of the times. For this purpose the King issued a Commission consisting of ten Bishops and twenty other divines. The most eminent were Stillingfleet, Patrick, Tillotson, Beveridge, Sharp, Tenison, Aldrich and Jane, the last two being Professors at Oxford. Stillingfleet at once began to occupy himself in gathering together all the Puritan objections, which had been answered again and again both at Hampton Court and in the Savoy Conference.¹ The Commissioners were so eager for revision that they held no less than eighteen sessions in almost the same number of days;² and the results at which they arrived were such that no one can doubt that their chief object was concession to Dissent, while the preservation of the historic Church with its ancient doctrine and practice was little thought of. No sooner had Stillingfleet made known what the nature of the agenda would be, than the representatives of

¹ Cf. *Studies in the History of the Prayer-Book*, pp. 221-225, by the author, from which the character of the proposals may be judged of.

² Their first session was on October 3, 1689.

the University withdrew from the Commission, and the proposed Revision moved on with rapid strides. The following changes will serve as examples in illustration of its revolutionary character: all chanting in public worship was to be discontinued; the reading of the Apocryphal Books was forbidden in Church; the names of non-scriptural saints were to be erased from the ~~Calendar~~alendar; the sign of the cross in Baptism was to be left optional, as well as the more important practice of kneeling for the reception of the Holy Communion. The pronouncing of the form of Absolution in Matins and Evensong was no longer to be restricted to a priest, while the Absolution appointed to be used in the Visitation of the Sick was destined to excision from the Prayer-book. In regard to the Ordinal a concession was proposed which would have gone far to forfeit altogether our claim to an Apostolic ministry. It was provided that a Nonconforming minister coming over to the Church should only be ordained hypothetically, provided he was willing to receive an Episcopal benediction.

There was one other change proposed, not doctrinal, but worthy of notice if only for the daring effrontery of those who suggested it. It would have been thought that the Collects at least would have

The spoiling
of the
Collects.

escaped the spoilers' hands. For beauty of expression and simplicity of teaching they were the very Ark of Liturgical Prayers; and it would seem to bespeak the utmost presumption to touch those ancient forms, which carry us back to the Church of Leo and Gelasius and Gregory. Yet the Commissioners did it without scruple. It fills us with amazement at the depth to which literary taste, not to mention Liturgical appreciation, must have sunk, to hear that as the Collects came forth from the Jerusalem Chamber, "enlarged by Patrick, with gathered force and spirit from the lucubrations of Burnet, and weighed word by word in the hands of Stillingfleet, they were considered to have been composed with that eloquence and propriety of expression, and such a flame of devotion, that nothing could more appeal to the hearts of the hearers or elevate their minds towards God."

We may take as an illustration the first on the list. Hear it as it came from the Sacramentary of Gelasius in the fifth century, in all the beauty and terseness of its original composition: "Lighten our darkness, we beseech Thee, O Lord, and by Thy great mercy defend us from all peril and danger of this night, for the love of Thy only Son Jesus Christ, Our Lord and Saviour." Hear it with its super-

added eloquence and propriety and soul-inspiring fervour as the Commissioners of King William sent it forth in the seventeenth century: "Almighty God, Who hast hitherto preserved us safely this day, by Thy Great Mercy defend us from all perils and dangers of this night. Pardon whatsoever we have done amiss, and settle our holy purposes to do better for the time to come: that laying ourselves down to sleep with these godly resolutions in our hearts, they may awaken with us in the morning, and we may daily grow more watchful in all our ways, for the love of Thy only Son our Saviour Jesus Christ."

The character of the proposed alterations in the Liturgy, suspected by the Nonjurors from the outset, became fully known long before the sittings of the Committee were concluded; and they lost no time in taking measures to overthrow the whole scheme of Revision. Their first step was to institute an active canvass for the return to Convocation of proctors pledged to resist it. They were well aware that, though undertaken without the advice of that body, the Church would never accept it till it had been ratified by the voice of her representative assembly. The result of their canvass was so successful that, when Convocation was summoned to

The Non-jurors set themselves to prevent the Revision.

receive the recommendations of the Commission, the Lower House manifested its disapproval of the whole proceedings in a most marked manner at its preliminary session. Two candidates were put forward for the office of Prolocutor—Tillotson, the moving spirit of the Revision; and Jane, who had withdrawn in disgust after the first sitting. The latter was chosen by an overwhelming majority.¹ When he entered the Upper House to address the Bishops in the customary Latin speech he upheld the primitive Constitution of the Church, and denounced with unmeasured censure everything that had been done by the Commission, concluding in the defiant language of the ancient barons before Henry III., "*Nolumus leges Angliæ mutari.*"²

It sealed the fate of the Revision. Its promoters³ discovered a plausible excuse for not presenting the result of their labours to the consideration of

¹ Fifty-five votes to twenty-eight.

² Kennet, 552.

³ Considering Macaulay's views, the testimony that he bears to the indirect result of the action of the Nonjurors and those who sympathised with them is remarkable. "It is an indisputable and a most instructive fact, that we are, in a great measure, indebted for the civil and religious liberty which we enjoy to the pertinacity with which the High Church party, in the Convocation of 1689, refused even to deliberate on any plan of Comprehension." "*Hist.*" iii. 495.

the House, in the absence of the Great Seal from the instrument of the Commission. Nothing more was heard of their resolutions; Convocation was prorogued and met no more during King William's reign, or, at least, held no deliberations at his command.

The fourth and last act that kindled apprehension was William's conduct in regard to the Church in Scotland, which was a direct breach of the promise made at his Coronation, that he would preserve the religion of the nation, and "the Church as it is now established."

Their apprehensions strengthened by William's conduct towards the Church in Scotland.

Since the Restoration the Scottish Church had been Episcopalian, for not a third,¹ perhaps not more than a fourth part of the Scottish people was inclined to the Presbyterate, and those so disposed were of the lower and middle classes. The nobility and gentry were largely in favour of Episcopacy.²

The Prince, guided by self-interest, resolved at

¹ "Life of Kettlewell," 124.

² Bishop Compton, in his interview with certain Scotch Bishops, touching the persecution of the Episcopal Clergy, told them, at the request of the King, that while in Holland he was made to believe "that Scotland generally all over was Presbyterian, but now he sees that the great body of the nobility and gentry are for Episcopacy, and it is the trading and inferior sort who are for Presbytery:" and then he promises, if they will support him, "to throw off the Presbyterians." Lathbury, 417.

the outset that Episcopacy should be preserved, but when the Bishops refused to give him their support in the British Parliament, with the most careless indifference to the principles at stake he veered round in favour of the Presbyterians. A successful insurrection of a Presbyterian mob in the district between the Tay and the Forth, which had been their stronghold since the establishment of the Episcopal Church, encouraged him to go over to the Presbyterian side. No sooner were the Royalist troops withdrawn, than the fanatical Covenanters of this part raised the standard of rebellion against the Church, and subjected the Clergy to the utmost violence and cruelty. At Glasgow, which they made the headquarters of their insurrection, they inflamed the passions of the people by burning effigies of the Archbishops of that city and of Armagh together with that of the Pope. From this they traversed the country, ejecting their Episcopal rivals, "the priests of Baal," as they called them, dragging them from their pulpits and altars, turning their wives and children into the streets, and with difficulty restraining themselves from a general massacre.¹

¹ Laing's "Hist. of Scotland," iv. 194. Two hundred of the Episcopal Clergy were ejected in this way on Christmas Day. Lathbury, 419.

Notwithstanding the appeals that were made to William to stay the spread of persecution and cruelty, he took no steps to put down the riotous bands, but left them to their unchecked violence till they had spread almost through the whole of Scotland.

The Nonjurors in England could not fail to see in his indifference to the sufferings of their brethren beyond the Tweed, and in the readiness with which he acceded to the demands of the fanatical Convention, to cast down the ancient platform by the extirpation of Prelacy, a shadow thrown before of what awaited the Church in this country, unless some powerful protest should be made.

Now, many charges have been brought against the Nonjurors; they have been accused of narrow-mindedness, of obstinacy, of want of sympathy with popular feeling, and the like. They are charges upon which it is most difficult to adjudicate in a spirit entirely devoid of prejudice, and it is wiser to leave them alone. But there is one accusation which has so often been made during the last two centuries at different times, with a view of making them obnoxious to the people, and so persistently believed in by Protestant and Dissenting controversialists even down to the present day, that it seems to call for more than a passing notice. It

The Non-jurors unjustly accused of Romeward tendencies.

is that the Nonjuring Clergy were secretly in favour of the Roman Religion, and that they clung to the King in the hopes of his restoration and the revival of the Papacy. Now, there are facts so patently contradictory of the charge, that it is extremely hard to believe that it could ever have been made with perfect honesty, or with any real desire to arrive at the truth.

What explanation, we are constrained to ask at the outset, have their traducers to give of their action in reference to King James's Declaration of Indulgence? Is it not true that five out of the eight Nonjuring Bishops had suffered imprisonment rather than accept a measure which they foresaw would legalise the introduction of the Roman Religion? How strangely, too, does their conduct stand out in contrast with the conduct of the great bulk of the Dissenters, who made no scruple of complying in the full knowledge of such an inevitable consequence! This circumstance calls for explanation, and we might well refuse to take any further notice of the supposed sympathy of the Nonjurors with Rome, till the explanation has been given; but there is abundant corroborative evidence ready to hand for rebutting the slanderous accusation.

If we look at the controversial treatises that were

written at this period in connection with the Papal claims, we find that the writers on the side of the Church and of Dissent were as a hundred to one, and foremost among the former were Nonjuring divines.¹

Yet further, when an attempt was made to fasten upon this body the anonymous authorship of the New or Jacobite Liturgy, published for use of the Church in Ireland, in which the petition occurred, "Raise up the former government both in Church and State, that we may be no longer without king, without priest, and without God in the world," the utter groundlessness of the accusation was proved by their positive denial of all knowledge of the Form, and their candid confession that every one of them, but a short time before, "either actually or in full preparation of mind, had hazarded all that they had in the world in opposing Popery and arbitrary power in England, and by God's grace would with greater zeal again sacrifice everything, even their very lives, if God should be pleased to call them thereto to prevent Popery and the arbitrary power of France coming upon the country and prevailing over it."²

The Jacobite
Liturgy
falsely
attributed
to them.

¹ Cf. Dodwell's "Discourses against the Romanists."

² The Bishops drew up a vindication of themselves. It was signed by Sancroft and four of his suffragans. Lathbury, 61.

Once more, the head and chief of the Nonjurors, Archbishop Sancroft, shortly before his refusal to accept the oath, published a series of Articles,¹ calling upon the Clergy of his Province four times a year to teach the people that the Papal Supremacy was an usurpation, and to watch constantly over their flocks lest "the evening wolves," as he designated the Roman priests, should enter into the fold and devour them; and he bade them take every opportunity of making it fully known that they were "really and sincerely irreconcilable enemies to the errors, superstitions, idolatries, and tyrannies of the Church of Rome."

If, therefore, they may be judged out of their own mouths and according to their own acts, such words and deeds should amply suffice to acquit the Nonjurors for ever of the unfounded charge so often and so maliciously brought forward.

One thing, however, must be remembered against them. It was the schism² which they created by

Their one
false step
in creating
a schism.

¹ The Articles were sent to all the Bishops of the Southern Province, in July, 1688.

² There can be little question that the continuance of the schism after the death or cession of the last of the deprived Bishops was sorely deprecated by some of the leading Nonjurors, such as Ken, Frampton, Dodwell, Nelson, and Brokesby. The consecrations of Hickes and Wagstaffe were wholly unjustifiable. Lloyd, the de-

consecrating Bishops in total independence of the civil authority, to minister for the ejected community. It was an act of such gravity, and fraught with so much peril, that, save by the overruling providence of God, it must have made shipwreck of the Anglican Church.

In the controversial treatises with which the Church was flooded at the time of their deprivation both sides were eagerly argued, and the position that the Nonjurors were the real Church, and that which

prived Bishop of Norwich, the last of the number—for Ken, who survived him, had voluntarily ceded his see to his successor—died Jan. 1. 1710. Then was the time to heal the breach, but it is well known that schism has a wonderful power of reproducing itself, and the after-history of the Nonjurors furnishes a good illustration. A dispute arose about the propriety of reviving four points in the First Prayer-book of Edward VI., viz. the mixed Chalice, Prayers for the Dead, the Invocation of the Holy Ghost, and the Prayer of Oblation. A new office was issued at the end of 1717, and came into use at the Easter of the following year, and communion was prohibited with those who adhered to the former use. Thus the Nonjuring schism split into two communions, “differing as widely from each other as both differed from the National Church.” Both communities continued to consecrate Bishops. This breach touching the “Usages” was healed in 1743, but almost immediately afterwards they became divided again into two sections in connection with the Rebellion of 1745. Gordon, the last Bishop of the Regular Nonjurors, died in 1779, but the Separatists lingered on. The death of Charles Edward, the young Pretender, in 1788, had removed the only real obstacle to allegiance to the English Sovereign, and many of the Nonjurors rejoined the National Church. They only became extinct, however, quite at the close of the century.

superseded them under the protection of the Civil administration an apostate and rebellious Church, found some able defenders; but posterity has not endorsed the defence.

The argument used in refusing the oath was, not that it was wrong in the abstract to swear allegiance to William, but that it was an immoral act to transfer the allegiance when it had been given to another, so long as he was alive. A newly consecrated Bishop, therefore, broke no tie of fealty, for he was precisely in the same relation, *qua* the oath of allegiance, to William as they were to James. So long as they based their defence upon the illegitimacy of transferring their oath, separation from the Church of the nation and the creation of a distinct community was wholly unjustifiable. The only ground for such a line of action would have been the visible realisation of those fears which impelled them to throw themselves across William's path and make him feel that he must first reckon with a most determined opposition, before he would succeed in changing the principles and constitution of the Church. Had they waited the course of events, and lived to see Presbyterianism forced upon the country, then no fault could have been found with them; indeed, it would have been their bounden

duty to provide by fresh consecrations for the maintenance of Episcopacy and the Apostolical succession. But though all the King's sympathies were anti-Catholic, and though for the most part he appointed to the vacant sees men of latitudinarian views,¹ no overt act in the direction of their anticipations had been perpetrated when they deliberately formed themselves into a separate Church.

It was the opinion of Bishop Ken, shared too at first by the Primate, that no open breach should be made, and that they should be content to bear with meekness the penalties of deprivation, in the conviction that time would bring the remedy. When the last of the deprived Bishops should have died (if no relief was brought before), the government of the Church would return to its normal condition, for there would be no bar then to the recognition of those, who had been thrust into the sees, as Canonical Bishops. The position of the Nonjurors would have enlisted more unqualified sympathy and admiration had they been satisfied merely to remain in communion with the National Church, performing such functions as they should be asked for from time to time. The minor difficulty, about joining in public prayers for William and Mary, might have

Bishop Ken
was adverse
to the
schism.

Their
difficulty in
the matter of

¹ e.g. Patrick, Stillingfleet, Tillotson.

the public
prayers
for the
Sovereign.

been overcome. It is true that, after the fatal step had been taken and the schism created, in self-justification they allowed the difficulty to assume the very gravest proportions, and even went the length of characterising such petitions as "immoral and unrighteous;" but no thoughtful man really doubts that, had the Nonjuring Clergy been content to follow the lines that Bishop Ken laid down, a *modus vivendi* would have been found.

The real
debt which
the Anglican
Church owes
to their
action.

But our closing thoughts must not be associated with aught to their disparagement. The Church of Christ is too deeply indebted to them to let other than feelings of gratitude predominate. It was their action which in the good providence of God saved the country from being robbed of its Catholic heritage. Had their protest never been made, it is more than probable that the Prince of Orange would have forced upon the nation the faith and discipline of Presbyterianism, to which he was deeply attached; and the Whigs, who were the dominant party in the Government, would certainly have acquiesced in his determination.

This, then, is the debt which England, and all the vast Empire under her rule, owes to the Nonjurors; it is not that they defended the Divine right of kings, but that they maintained the Divine origin

of the Church; it is not that they remained leal and true in their sworn allegiance to a king who had forfeited all claim to retain it, but that they took their stand in the hour of threatening danger to uphold the integrity of the one Catholic and Apostolic Church in this land.

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